

Y. JANUARY 11, 1995
COLUMBIA
Charles' friend
Camilla to divorce
LONDON (R) — Camilla, the Queen's second wife, is to divorce her husband, Prince Charles, after a bitter legal battle.
The couple's divorce was announced today by their lawyers.
The Queen's official spokesman said the divorce was "a private matter" and that the couple had agreed to the divorce "amicably".
The divorce is expected to be finalized in the next few months.
The Queen is 66 years old and has been married to Prince Charles for 20 years.
The couple have two sons, Prince William and Prince Harry.
The divorce is expected to be a landmark case in British law.
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4 Lebanese, Israeli wounded in Lebanon

SIDON (AFP) — An Israeli soldier and four Lebanese civilians were wounded in fighting between guerrillas and Israeli forces in South Lebanon on Wednesday, officials said. Israeli military officials said a soldier was wounded in an exchange of fire with guerrillas near the village of Qunin in Israel's self-declared "security zone" in South Lebanon. The Democratic and Popular Fronts for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP and PFLP) said their guerrillas ambushed an Israeli patrol, setting a Markava tank ablaze and killing or wounding six infantrymen. One woman and three other Lebanese civilians were wounded when Israeli forces and their allied South Lebanon Army (SLA) militiamen fired back at the village of Kfar Tibnit near the zone, police said. Security officials in Lebanon said Israeli and SLA forces were trying to track down the guerrillas. One official said the guerrillas had fired about 11 Katyusha rockets around Qunin and there was heavy retaliatory shelling from Israeli positions. Israeli gunners pounded the villages of Hadatha, Aita Al Jabal, Tibnit and the outskirts of Qunin after the attack.

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Ex-senator dies

AMMAN (Petra) — Speaker of the Upper House of Parliament Ahmad Al Lawzi on Wednesday announced the death of former Senator Sheikh Nayef Haditha Al Khreish. The deceased was a known leader of the Central Jordan Bedouin tribes. The late Sheikh Nayef, brother of Minister of State Jamal Khreish, served as senator in 1986 and 1987. Sheikh Nayef, who was 70, is survived by a wife and five children.

Bomb injures two Israeli soldiers

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Two Israeli soldiers sustained minor injuries when a bomb went off near an army checkpoint in the south of the autonomous Gaza Strip early Wednesday, military sources said. The two soldiers were hit by shrapnel and taken to hospital in Israel. The device had been planted near an army checkpoint during the night near the Kissufim dam on the border between the Gaza Strip and Israel.

'Iran sought contacts with Israel'

TEL AVIV (AFP) — A senior Iranian diplomat has tried to establish contact with an Israeli university professor in the United States, military radio reported Tuesday. Professor Amatzia Baram told the radio an aide from the unnamed diplomat called at his home in Washington last year. The aide proposed a secret hotel meeting Mr. Amatzia, a specialist on Iraq. The diplomat would fly to Washington by private jet from New York to discuss relations between Tehran and Tel Aviv, Baram said. He informed Israel of the approach and was told to go ahead, but the meeting never came off following the July 18 bombing of a Jewish association in Buenos Aires, which left 95 people dead. Israel blamed Iran.

Israel will not sign NPT — Peres

PARIS (R) — Foreign Minister Shimon Peres made clear on Wednesday that Israel would again refuse to sign the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty when it comes up for extension in Geneva in April. "Israel has said it has no intention of introducing nuclear weapons into the Middle East... but one must first introduce peace to the Middle East," Mr. Peres said.

Dahlan denies threatening settlers

GAZA (R) — Palestinian security chief Mohammad Dahlan denied on Wednesday he threatened Jewish settlers aboard a school bus during a standoff on a main road in Gaza a day earlier. Mr. Dahlan, who heads the Palestinian preventive security service in Gaza, said he blocked the road in front of a school bus and its army escort after they persistently prevented him and other Arab drivers from passing.

Morocco to get centre-right cabinet

RABAT (R) — Morocco's King Hassan on Wednesday ended weeks of political uncertainty by turning his back on the opposition parties and announcing plans to name a new government from the parliamentary centre-right majority. An official statement carried by the Moroccan news agency MAP gave no date for the nomination or give any indication about who would be named prime minister. Diplomats believe Abdul Latif Filali will be asked to remain as head of government. "King Hassan decided to abandon for the time being the constitution of an alternative government and to appoint instead a government represented by the present parliamentary majority," MAP quoted a royal palace statement as saying.

King calls for urgent action to end chaos on Jordan's roads

Government, police force and public have distinct roles in addressing the problem

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein on Wednesday called on the government and the Public Security Department (PSD) to take immediate measures to end the carnage on the roads of the Kingdom resulting from accidents.

Speaking at a meeting with the PSD director general, Lieutenant-General Abdul Rahman Adwan, and his senior assistants in the presence of Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, the King said traffic problems and safety on the roads warranted urgent action.

This task requires cooperation on the part of the public and the PSD alike, said the King.

Any faults or imbalances in the existing legislation should be addressed drastically, but the Jordanian citizens also have a duty to help ensure safety on the roads by abiding by the laws and by having their vehicles in good order, the King added.

King Hussein noted that some of the highways were in need of repair so that they can absorb the heavy traffic on them and withstand climatic conditions in winter time. He said the government would deal with this issue.

King Hussein also noted that motorists commit serious violations of traffic rules, causing a waste of human and material resources.

He said that the way to end the carnage is to abide by traffic regulations, noting that education on traffic should start at a young age.

King Hussein emphasised the role of the drivers training centres in preparing drivers to become a generation of law abiding and responsible people.

He stressed that the police force should be provided with proper training to carry out their mission of testing drivers and issuing them driving licences.

The King also stressed the need for the PSD to give due attention to the tourist police force to meet the requirements of the coming stage which is expected to witness a boom in tourism.

This force, he added, should be ready to ensure the safety of the visitors of Jordan in a manner that would preserve the country's excellent security image.

Interior Minister Saleh Hamad was also present at the PSD meeting.

In a meeting with journalists on Dec. 26, King Hussein pledged to make tackling traffic problems in the Kingdom one of the main priorities at the impending programme of reorganisation.

The King said he was appalled by what he saw while travelling from Aqaba to Amman along the desert highway a few days ago.

Long vehicles were racing along the road ignoring traffic signs, some of which were misplaced anyway and tyres littered the highway, the King noted.

"What was amazing," the King said, "was that there were so many police patrols along the highway," and nothing was being done about the hazardous driving conditions.

"This is a priority issue," the King said, adding that he was distressed by the number of accidents in the country.

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First House encounter shows cabinet base in Parliament

Pension law endorsed despite fiery debate

By Ayman Al Safadi
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The cabinet of Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker Wednesday had its first encounter with the Lower House of Parliament with the outcome confirming that the government can count on winning a comfortable parliamentary majority in the upcoming vote of confidence.

The focus of the session was a controversial draft law on pension for military personnel which was approved as presented by the government.

There was a lengthy and at times heated debate over excluding old pensioners from the raise, promised last month by the government of Dr. Abdul Salam Majali to newly retired army personnel.

The piece of legislation was finally approved after Sharif Zeid said he shared parliamentarians' concern for the living standards of old pensioners and that the government can increase their pensions through regulations.

The final vote on the draft legislation reflected the strength of the parliamentary base of the new government, which includes 17 deputies and has the support of the majority of the members of the four blocs they represent.

The draft law, along with a similar legislation for retired civil service personnel, allows for substantial increases in the pensions of army and civil

service personnel who retired after Dec. 1, 1994 but gives no such raises to older pensioners.

The judicial and financial committees of the Lower House, which adopted a joint recommendation to treat civil pensioners and military personnel equally, had recommended to the House that the draft law be approved as presented by the government.

A number of lawmakers said the law was drafted to improve the living standards of retired army personnel in implementation of His Majesty King Hussein's directives. But, they said, the majority of the people, whose deteriorating living conditions prompted the initiation of the legislation, will not benefit from the move because old pensioners were denied the raise.

The prime minister said he agreed on the need "to do old pensioners justice," adding that the government can raise their income through regulations, which he said the government will issue after studies for them are completed.

Earlier Sharif Zeid told the House he was looking for more solid cooperation with the legislative authority, saying "consultation and dialogue will" mark the government's dealing with the House.

"The new era requires the cooperation of all and my government will have an open mind and reach out to all... so that everyone can contribute to building the country and protecting its stability," said Sharif Zeid, stressing his government's commitment to democracy and pluralism.

Commitment to democracy and pluralism was also expressed by House Speaker Sa'd Hayel Srour, who said he looked forward to seeing enhanced cooperation between the government and the House.

But not all deputies were that positive in receiving the new government, which is expected to win up to 56 votes of confidence from the House when it seeks its confidence, expectedly next week.

In addition to the Islamic Action Front and leftist deputies who oppose the government for ideological and other reasons, voices of dissent emerged in the House yesterday by deputies who feel that they or their constituencies were unjustly kept out of the cabinet.

The first to express such an attitude was Deputy Ahmad Al Qudah (Ajloun), who said people in his governorate were surprised that they were left out of the government "as if they do not exist on the map of the Kingdom."

In a speech marked by obvious frustration and anger, he said people from Ajloun were denied the

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Talabani wants new Kurdish elections

BEIRUT (AFP) — The leader of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) urged a rival Iraqi Kurdish faction Wednesday to accept new elections to resolve a bitter conflict in Iraqi Kurdistan. "Dual leadership harms and hinders democracy. We think elections would settle the issue," Jalal Talabani told the Saudi-owned newspaper Al Hayat published in Beirut. The PUK and Masoud Barzani's Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) Sunday agreed on a ceasefire to end bloody clashes that erupted on Dec. 24. Estimates of the casualties range from 100 to 500 people killed, according to Kurdish sources. The ceasefire agreement called for a withdrawal of the rival forces to positions they held before the clashes and the deployment of Iraqi National Congress opposition coalition forces to separate them. The PUK and KDP obtained an equal number of votes in elections held in May 1992, and each have seven seats in the self-proclaimed Kurdish government based in the city of Erbil. Mr. Talabani accused Baghdad and Turkey of supporting his rival. He said Ankara was supplying money and weapons to the KDP and voiced fears that Baghdad would openly intervene.

Kabariti is due in Cairo, talks to focus on Jerusalem

By Caroline Farraj
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti heads to Cairo today for talks with his Egyptian counterpart Amr Musa on bilateral relations and the status of Jerusalem ahead of a meeting of an Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) committee on the Holy City.

Nayef Qadi, Jordan's ambassador to Egypt, told the Jordan Times and Al Ra'i in a telephone interview on Wednesday that Mr. Kabariti's visit to Cairo was in response to an invitation extended by Mr. Musa.

Mr. Qadi said that in addition to bilateral relations and Arab and Muslim issues, Mr. Kabariti's talks would specifically focus on the issue of Jerusalem and the Islamic shrines in the Holy City.

"It is clear that Egypt has a new approach to the issue of Jerusalem and we hope to learn more about it in (Thursday's) meeting," Mr. Qadi said.

The Jerusalem Committee of the OIC is scheduled to meet in the Moroccan mountain resort of Ifrane on Jan. 16 and 17 at the level of foreign ministers of the member countries of the panel, which is chaired by King Hassan II of Morocco.

The committee was established in Jeddah in 1975.

The committee met during the OIC summit in Casablanca, Morocco, in December, when Egypt was admitted as a new member. Iraq, the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and Jordan are also members.

The debate over Jerusalem caused friction between the PLO and Jordan during the summit.

Jordan wanted the final resolution to take note of its role as guardian of the Islamic holy sites in Jerusalem. The PLO, supported by some of the influential Arab countries, rejected the Jordanian language and included a reference to Saudi Arabia.

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Ground laid for Mideast bank

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — Officials from 37 countries and organisations met Monday and Tuesday to discuss the establishment of a Middle East development bank that will support peace efforts in the region.

The Washington meetings will be followed by others, with a summit scheduled to be held in Jordan to wrap up the discussions, the State Department said.

The talks were held to follow up on an agreement reached at a regional economic conference in Casablanca in November to study the possibility of creating the Middle East Bank for Economic Cooperation and Development.

Israel sent a delegate to the meetings, as did most Arab states except Syria, Libya and Lebanon, which also boycotted the Casablanca conference.

The United States, Canada, Japan and the European Union also sent representatives.

Dr. Shaath said on Tuesday the Palestinians had asked U.S. diplomats in occupied Jerusalem "to intervene immediately to stop the settlements" and that Mr. Arafat had also contacted the U.S. administration directly.

Washington, Israel's main

would be discussed by Mr. Rabin and Mr. Arafat on Jan. 19.

Witnesses to Wednesday's clashes said a news photographer was struck in the head by a rock, apparently thrown by Palestinian protesters. Israeli soldiers hurled a percussion grenade at stone-throwing Palestinians during the protest.

Yasser Abed Rabbo, a member of the Palestinian Authority, told Israel Radio Tuesday's expansion of Elkanah settlement in the northern part of the West Bank was pushing the peace process to a dead end.

"I think that this is the end of the road either all these activities should stop and the settlers withdraw from the occupied and confiscated land or the Palestinian authority will have to take serious and decisive decisions," he said.

About 200 Palestinians tried to break through an army roadblock outside the village of Kufir Al Deek to reach a new building site near the settlement of Alei Zahav, witnesses said.

They said Nathan Harnik, a photographer for the Associated Press, was struck in the head by a rock, apparently thrown by a Palestinian protester. He was taken to an army infirmary for treatment. His condition was not immediately known.

Palestinian witnesses earlier said soldiers fired shots on the demonstrators. Others at the site said they only heard the explosion of the percussion grenade. No Palestinians were hurt.

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Washington, Israel's main

Russians attack Grozny palace; Dudayev urges truce

GROZNY (Agencies) — Russian forces launched new attacks on the presidential palace in the battered Chechen capital Grozny on Wednesday while warplanes screamed overhead, sending residents scattering in panic.

As the fighting intensified, Chechen President Dzhokhar Dudayev called for an end to the violence and indicated he was willing to enter negotiations with Moscow.

Holding a hastily arranged press conference in his first public appearance in nearly two weeks, Mr. Dudayev acknowledged that Chechen independence forces could not hold out against the vastly superior firepower of the Russian military.

"Of course we cannot physically resist against a power like Russia," he told reporters at a transformed convalescent home about five kilometres outside Grozny.

Asked if he was willing to negotiate with Russia over his government's 1991 declaration of independence for Chechnya, Mr. Dudayev said: "When the house is burning, you have to put the fire out. Then we can see what's left and what must be rebuilt."

He added that the notion of independence was "relative," but did not spell out any terms for talks with Moscow.

"We could resolve this conflict in a day, even an hour," he said, adding that Russians and Chechens "are both losers" in the war launched when Russia sent troops in to put down the Chechen independence drive on Dec. 11.

But Mr. Dudayev, wearing a military uniform and a beret and surrounded by bodyguards armed with Kalashnikov automatic rifles, defiantly warned Moscow that while "Russia has interests in the Caucasus, it cannot ignore our right to life... Even if they tear down the Caucasus mountains, no one can take away the soul of the Chechen people."

Mr. Dudayev's last appearance was a television address made about two weeks ago, before Russian forces launched their assault on the Chechen capital.

He had not been seen in public for the past two weeks, raising speculation that he had left the capital or even been killed or wounded.

Russian President Boris

Yeltsin said last week that Moscow was willing to negotiate an end to the conflict, but only on the basis of Chechnya remaining a part of the Russian federation.

In Moscow, Russian deputies met in emergency session but shied away from moves to halt the army campaign.

In Brussels, North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) ambassadors registered continuing international concern over the Chechen crisis, calling for the earliest possible end to the violence via a negotiated settlement.

The ambassadors appealed to Moscow to use the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) to help end the war and urged respect for a newly agreed OSCE code of conduct requiring states to avoid disproportionate use of force against their own people when restoring order.

A 48-hour ceasefire, declared by Russia but violated from the start by both sides, was due formally to expire at 8 a.m. (0500 GMT) on Thursday with little sign that the

Russian President Boris

Little hope amid Algeria's bloodshed

By John Baggaley
Reuter

NICOSIA — As sun set on an Algerian hillside overlooking the Mediterranean three years ago on Wednesday, Algeria's president sat before television cameras in his palace as a silent coup was played out.

Chadli Benjedid told the nation he had quit.

The simple act plunged Algeria into a whirlpool of bloodshed — a conflict between unelected army-backed authorities and determined Islamists thwarted of electoral victory.

Today, after an estimated death toll of 30,000, diplomats and commentators see only a slim hope of averting more deaths and a total civil war in the nation of 26 million people.

"Only a miracle will save Algeria from descending into civil war in 1995," says a forecast by the London-based Control Risks Information Services which monitors the North African country.

The forecast was made before Tuesday's announcement that opposition politicians, including a representative of Algeria's powerful but outlawed Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) were to announce a peace plan in the next few days.

But diplomats, speaking after the government denounced the politicians' talks in Rome, saw little immediate hope of a breakthrough from the meeting.

The presidency had already condemned it and those taking part.

Algeria, a potentially rich country with gas and oil exports earning around \$9 billion a year, has been crippled by foreign debt, mismanagement and corruption that have pushed more than half its people below the poverty line.

On Tuesday, following a long line of price hikes which have brought more despair, the authorities increased milk prices.

It was desperation for

Yemeni, Saudi leaders discuss border incident

SANAA (Agencies) — Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh and King Fahd of Saudi Arabia discussed steps taken to contain a border incident Tuesday during a telephone conversation, Yemen's official news agency SABA said.

The two leaders exchanged views on "the efforts made to contain an incident that occurred in the morning in the northeast" of Yemen, on their disputed border, SABA said without elaborating.

The conversation was "aimed at preventing the enemies of the two countries from harming their relations... and at boosting their brotherly and good-neighbourly links," the agency added.

The incident occurred as a high-level Yemeni delegation was due to travel to Saudi Arabia to prepare a visit by Mr. Saleh.

Earlier this month Yemen and Saudi Arabia agreed to halt military movements along their border and pull their forces back from the

Aid agencies serve notice to Somali kidnappers

MOGADISHU (AFP) — Relief agencies in Somalia decided Wednesday to suspend all non-emergency activities in Mogadishu if French aid worker Rudy Marq was not released from captivity by 6:00 p.m. (1500 GMT) Thursday.

Mr. Marq, a 24-year-old single man from the Champagne region, was captured on Dec. 17 by gunmen who subsequently demanded ransom of \$52,000 from his relatives. International Association Against Famine (IAAF).

Wednesday's meeting of international non-governmental organisations (NGOs) decided that no new projects would be started until Mr. Marq's release, and that NGOs would ask U.N. agencies to join the boycott if he was not released by their deadline.

The U.N. agencies are reported ready to join in, with all organisations here feeling that at capitulation would lead to further kidnappings as U.N. troops and civilians pull

NEWS IN BRIEF

Swiss plane evacuates heart patient from Iraq

BAGHDAD (AFP) — A Swiss plane evacuated a heart patient from Iraq Tuesday for treatment in a London hospital — the first such mercy flight since an international embargo was imposed on the country following its August 1990 invasion of Kuwait. U.N. spokesman Keith Wilson said the flight was authorised by the U.N. Sanctions Committee, following a request from an Iraqi representative.

The Swiss Air ambulance plane flew from Zurich to the Habbaniyah military airport, 60 kilometres from Baghdad, where it took on board Yahya Dhia Jaafar, 53. The cost of the trip was covered entirely by the family, according to his brother Jaafar Dhia Jaafar, an Iraqi presidential adviser.

The official Iraqi agency INA said several sick people had died in the past few years due to the U.N.'s refusal to allow the national airline Iraqi Airways to make humanitarian flights. Since the embargo was imposed Iraqis have had to travel overseas to Amman to fly abroad.

Pharaoh's statue to be moved from central Cairo

CAIRO (AFP) — Egyptian authorities are to move an ancient statue of Pharaoh Ramses II from the centre of Cairo to a new site near the pyramids at Giza to save it from pollution damage, the daily Al Wafd reported.

The decision ended a long-running dispute between the regional authorities, who wanted to keep the statue in the city centre, and the national antiquities department, which argued that the limestone statue was endangered by exhaust gases. At a meeting Monday chaired by Culture Minister Farouq Hosni, senior officials in charge of Egyptian antiquities decided to move the statue, which weighs 2.5 tonnes and stands 15.6 metres high, to a new spot outside a museum to be built near the pyramids.

Cairo, with some 15 million inhabitants and tens of thousands of vehicles, is one of the most polluted cities in the world. The statue, discovered in the Nile Delta region early this century, stands in one of Cairo's main squares near the central station. Ramses II, who reigned circa 1300-1234 B.C., was one of the greatest Pharaohs of ancient Egypt, famed for his victories against the Hittites in Asia.

Turkish police hold fleeing Iraqis

ANKARA (R) — Turkish police on Tuesday arrested 79 Iraqi Christians trying to flee across the Aegean Sea to Greece, security officials in Canakkale province said.

The Iraqis have been caught and sent to court, said a security official in Canakkale town, which is split by the Dardanelles Strait in northwestern Turkey. "They had lived in Istanbul for a while, and some Turks were trying to get them across by boat to other countries through Greece," a Canakkale prosecutor told Reuters by telephone. He did not say what charges the group faced but the Anatolian news agency said they were for Turkey had expired.

The official said the 79, comprising several families, were fleeing what he called "persecution in their homeland but had not been able to get visas for the countries they wanted to enter. Police stopped the group travelling by bus in Canakkale's Ezine district on the way to the neighbouring Ayvacik township, where they were to be sent across the Aegean Sea to Greece. "They will initially pay a fine of 70,000 lira (\$1.80), then the court will decide if they can stay in Turkey," he said.

Iraq invited to Cairo book fair

CAIRO (AFP) — Iraq has received an invitation for the first time since 1990, to the Cairo book fair which opened here on Wednesday, Iraqi diplomatic sources said here.

"An invitation to attend was sent to Iraq by the general book authority but due to the embargo imposed (by the United Nations) Iraq's participation will be only symbolic," the sources said. "It is the first time an invitation has been addressed to Iraq" to take part in the Cairo book fair since the Gulf crisis of August 1990 to February 1991, they said, adding that neither Iraq nor Kuwait had been invited.

In recent months Iraq, several other cultural events in Cairo, the diplomats said. Israel will not take part in the book fair for the ninth consecutive year. Egypt is apparently not keen to expand

Drought threatens crop season in Morocco

RABAT (AFP) — Drought is posing a serious threat to the new planting season in Morocco where it has barely rained at all since September and reservoirs are down to 30 per cent of normal capacity, officials said. Farmers fear the drought will ruin their early cereal crops and even affect production of citrus fruits, one of the country's main exports.

On Tuesday, the government adopted a series of measures to alleviate the impact of the drought, amidst that agriculture sustains more than half the country's 28 million people. Agriculture Minister Abdelaziz Mesiane said rainfall this season was only 55 per cent that of 1994. Morocco has suffered drought for much of the past 10 years although rainfall in 1994 was good. The government said it would take over "financing farming activities" this year in view of the drought. The government undertook to safeguard livestock and provide adequate drinking water to the population, it was announced. The government said it had "taken steps to ensure that food supplies reached national markets notably for the fasting month of Ramadan" which starts at the beginning of February.

1994 was year of progress; hard issues face 1995, U.S. expert says

WASHINGTON — The past year was one of great advances in the Middle East, the Israeli-Jordan treaty was signed, the Palestinian Authority still lacks the infrastructure to collect the taxes it needs to begin building a modern society. Winning the elections called for in the region of principle, and a long way of establishing Arafat's legitimacy, but so far the process has been stalled.

Gaza is the one of the most difficult issues facing the Palestinian Authority. With almost as much population as the West Bank on less than 7 per cent of its land mass, Gaza is almost ungovernable. Dr. Dunn says. It is naive to think that people from outside the area could govern it easily.

Accepting Gaza, the poorest and most Islamicist of the Palestinian regions, was a big risk for Arafat and the Palestinian Liberation Organisation. Dr. Dunn says. "This was the cost of the agreement... I think they took the deal they had to take."

The problems Israel has protecting the isolated Jewish settlement of Netzarim in the Gaza Strip, has already demonstrated how difficult it

will be for the Israelis to move on to the next stage of the peace process, which calls for the redeployment of Israeli forces from West Bank cities. Whereas Rabin may be willing to abandon certain Jewish settlements there, his political coalition is so fragile, Dunn says, he simply cannot do it. "They've got themselves pinned in a corner. It's going to be very hard to take the next step in the peace process if every single one of the settlements must be protected."

The basic outlines for an Israeli-Syrian peace accord "are pretty much obvious to everybody," Dr. Dunn says: an Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights; their return to Syrian sovereignty; and the installation of an international, and possibly American peacekeeping force.

Syrian President Hafez Al Assad may be in a better position to deliver his end of the bargain than Rabin. Dr. Dunn's opinion. There have been "a lot of reshuffles and retirements" in Syria's military and security services, which suggests that Mr. Assad may be preparing the country for both a peace accord and his succession, he

says.

Mr. Assad will not make peace without gaining possession of the Golan. However, Nor does he wish to move too quickly. "He won't be seen as bowing on the heels of King Hussein," Dr. Dunn says. He must be seen as "tougher" than the Jordanian leader.

One of the keys to an eventual Syrian-Israeli peace is Lebanon. "Lebanon is a crucial issue. Lebanon is where Syria can apply pressure." Although Mr. Assad does not control Hizbollah, the radical Islamic group located in Southern Lebanon, this is by choice. Dr. Dunn says, suggesting that Mr. Assad could rein Hizbollah in if he so desired.

Adding to the uncertainty surrounding the Golan, is the active campaign which Likud, the principal Israeli opposition party, has waged against placing U.S. peacekeeping forces there. The opposition of new Senate Foreign Relations chairman Jesse Helms and many others in the Republican-dominated Congress is also likely to work against any plan which calls for American peacekeepers on the Golan.

The most troublesome situation the Middle East faces in the upcoming year is Algeria, which Dr. Dunn describes as being in the midst of "a very vicious civil war... Civil war has no good part."

He says more than at least 10,000 people have been killed in the fighting.

"The old structure have been destroyed and the new one is not yet in place," he says. Algerian President Liamine Zeroual's effort to start a dialogue with the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) this past fall "failed miserably." Mr. Zeroual obviously faced considerable internal criticism and the two top FIS leaders were put back in prison after a brief period of comparative liberty.

"At best, it was too little, too late," Dr. Dunn says of the abortive talks with FIS.

In fact, it is not at all certain how much FIS controls the situation in Algeria now. Dr. Dunn says. The Armed Islamic Group is "clearly an effective underground movement," and have shown that their influence extends even into the Berber sections of the country, where support for Islamic militancy is minimal.

As for what lies ahead, Dr. Dunn thinks "total anarchy" almost as credible an outcome as the creation of an Islamic state. Indeed, the country will be fortunate if any central authority emerges from the conflict, he added.

Dr. Dunn is more optimistic about Egypt, which also suffers from an active fundamentalist movement. "The Egyptian government is concentrated in the central and upper Nile regions — Asyut and Qena are 'in something like a state of insurrection' — but outside those areas, there has not been too much confrontation, and Cairo has been relatively quiet over the past year."

As for Iraq, Dr. Dunn acknowledges that there are not many ways to pressure Saddam Hussein without hurting the Iraqi people. This could well damage U.S. interests in the Arab World as well as with nations such as France and Russia which wish to see the U.N. sanctions eased. But Dr. Dunn does not expect the U.S. to change policy, nor Saddam to comply completely with the U.N. resolutions. "He's prepared to starve his country," he says. "Barring a change of leadership, he says, the situation will continue to worsen for the Iraqi people."

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 771-1114

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Ministry of Water and Irrigation Secretary General Qusay Qteishat Wednesday holds a press conference at the ministry (Petra photo)

Ministry to enforce strict rules on sales of water to public

AMMAN (Petra) — As of mid-January the Ministry of Water and Irrigation will start stricter monitoring of water trucks and the rates charged by their owners, according to Qusay Qteishat, the ministry's secretary general Wednesday.

Mr. Qteishat told a press conference that each water spring owner selling water to the public will have to pay a JD500 annual fee and will be subject to regular control by the ministry to ensure that the water is potable.

Acting in conjunction with

the health ministry, the water ministry will conduct inspections and test the water. Springs failing the tests will be shut down, said Mr. Qteishat.

Water spring owners have three months to obtain a licence to sell water, he said. He warned that without a licence, no water spring will be permitted to operate.

Water truck operators must also obtain a licence from the Department for Licensing Drivers and Vehicles and affix an official label on the sides of their trucks

which indicates that they are licensed, according to Mr. Qteishat. He added that the Public Security Department (PSD) would also cooperate with the two ministries in ensuring the effectiveness of these measures.

Mr. Qteishat also said that one cubic metre of water sells for 300 fils to the water truck operators, and is to be resold at JD1.75 and JD1.5 to the public in Western Amman and other areas respectively. He said the new water rates for the trucks would go into effect next week.

Conference discusses how to tackle disabilities, congenital diseases

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The issue of disabilities and congenital diseases, brought further to light by a proposed law to require couples to undergo premarital blood tests, was tackled by concerned institutions Wednesday at the opening of a two-day conference.

In a lecture presented by Professor of Paediatric Medicine at Jordan University Abdul Karim Al Qudrah stressed the need to raise public awareness of the health risks to children born to couples who are blood relatives. "It is very important to educate people about intermarriage risks," Dr. Qudrah said.

Last year the government introduced a draft law that would require couples planning to marry to take blood tests before their nuptials to determine if either partner suffers from any blood disease and other genetic problems that could result in their children being born with congenital malformation or retardation.

Representing the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Information and Communication Officer Sima Bahous said that UNICEF's strategy on childhood disability rests heavily on prevention, early detection and rehabilitation. "Prevention of disabilities is directly linked to the suc-

cess in the elimination of poverty, disease and hunger and to the realisation of equitable and sustainable development," Dr. Bahous said at the opening of the two-day session organised by the National Federation of the Business and Professional Women's Clubs (BPWC) and UNICEF, and attended by Her Majesty Queen Noor, the honorary president of the BPWC.

According to Dr. Bahous, approximately 150 million disabled children are among the 500 million disabled people worldwide.

Furthermore, she said that more than 80 per cent of all disabled persons live in developing countries and "less than three per cent of the disabled persons in the developing countries receive rehabilitation services of any kind."

"The World Health Organisation (WHO) statistics showed that in any society 7-10 per cent of the population in any country in the world will have some kind of disability," Dr. Bahous said, addressing 130 participants attending the conference.

During the lecture, Dr. Bahous referred to one of UNICEF's projects, the Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR), which she said is an approach that presents an opportunity to reach a far larger number of children through the active in-



Her Majesty Queen Noor Wednesday attends the first day of a conference on disabilities and congenital diseases. Also on the podium from right to left are Planning and Development Adviser to the

Queen In'am Mufli, President of the Business and Professional Women's Club Hind Abdul Jabbar and UNICEF Information and Communication Officer Sima Bahous (Petra photo)

volvement of their families, neighbourhood and the community.

"The aim is to provide communities with prevention, early detection and rehabilitation services at a cost that the community can eventually bear on its own," she said.

"According to WHO, 70 per cent of all needs of disabled children can be met at the local level if CBR pro-

grammes were implemented," she added.

Hind Abdul Jabbar, president of BPWC, told the gathering that voluntary groups and official organisations should cooperate in spreading awareness through the media and other avenues to curb the rising number of children born with disabilities.

The conference, held at the Inter-Continental Hotel, and

attended by representatives of various ministries and private and public institutions, will discuss five papers: cancer and heredity; early diagnosis of congenital disease before birth; the religious opinions regarding congenital disease and abortion, handicaps and criminal behaviour, and the role of the Diagnosis Centre at the Ministry of Health on preventing handicaps.

Police clear \$100 bills printed in 1990 as controversy lingers

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Despite official assurances that American banknotes of \$100 denomination printed in 1990 with a slight difference in colour are authentic, the fate of such bills in Jordan appeared destined to remain in controversy for some time on Wednesday.

Several moneychangers said they were sceptical over the results of tests conducted by Jordanian authorities and that they would refuse to deal in the bills before international currency experts certify that the bills were not forged.

But Mutie Al Kabarti, head of the Jordanian Moneychangers Association, said a majority of the exchange houses in Jordan had accepted the verdict of the Anti-Narcotics and Anti-Forgery Department that the bills were genuine.

"We have extensive experience in dealing in currency, and we can easily spot forgeries," said Mr. Kabarti. "In general, Jordanian moneychangers are very

careful and do not allow forgeries to escape them."

The controversy over the \$100 notes printed in 1990 surfaced a few days ago when it was reported that part of \$35,000 presented by a local businessman were slightly yellowish in colour and could be counterfeit.

Mr. Kabarti said his firm was approached by the businessman, whom he did not identify, but the sale did not take place because of "disagreement over the exchange rate."

"We did not turn him down because of any doubt over the validity of the currency," said Mr. Kabarti, whose firm is one of the oldest exchange houses in the country.

Subsequently, the businessman, who is believed to have received the "suspect" notes from a local commercial bank, went to another dealer who suspected the notes were forged. Police were called in, and the bills were put through tests which proved their authenticity, Mr. Kabarti said.

A police statement carried

in the local press on Wednesday assured the public of the authenticity of the \$100 notes printed in 1990.

But, Marwan Al Alami of Alami Exchange said his firm was refusing to accept similar bills. "We have our own system of verifying the authenticity of currency," he said. "We will wait until Swiss or American authorities certify that these notes are genuine."

"We are willing to accept a certification by the embassy of the U.S.," he added.

According to Mr. Alami, "it is not only the colour but also the texture of the notes that gives rise to suspicions."

"When you have dealt with a particular currency for a long time, you get a feeling the moment you hold a note in your hand," said Mr. Alami. In this case, he said, "there is something amiss."

But Mr. Kabarti insisted that there was "nothing wrong with the paper," and that the "problem is only with the slight difference in colour."

That appeared to narrow down the controversy to the differing approaches of moneychangers rather than any basic question on the authenticity over the currency.

International currency experts agreed that part of the currency printed in 1990 by the U.S. government was slightly lighter in colour, but that the bills were widely accepted. They said Jordanian exchange firms were extremely cautious and the slightest doubt cast on the authenticity of any currency, whether American or otherwise, was enough for them to stop dealing in that currency.

Mr. Kabarti said, however, the number of cases of counterfeit notes surfacing in Jordan had been very low in recent years.

"At my firm, we come across forgeries perhaps once in a month," he said. "Forgeries are not limited to American dollars either," he said, adding that he had found counterfeit European currencies in Jordan.

Jordan was hit by a wave of counterfeit currency, mainly

American dollars, in the late 80s. Law enforcement authorities launched a wide crackdown and busted several gangs engaged in distributing forged currencies. Dozens were jailed, some of them are still serving sentences.

According to experts, the so-called "super-G" notes are the most difficult to detect among the forged currencies circulating in the Middle East. "They are crafted so skillfully that they successfully pass through some of the sophisticated laser machines designed to check currency," said an expert.

Many believe that the "super-G" notes originate in Iran, a country traditionally known for its skillful craftsmen. The Iranian government has reported the busting of several major counterfeit groups in the last few years.

A U.S. congressional panel accused Iran of printing "high-quality" American banknotes and distributing them in the market with Syrian help. Both Tehran and Damascus denied the charge.

Zarqa police arrest suspects in robbery, imposter cases

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

ZARQA — Police warned citizens and especially foreign residents to verify the identification of anyone approaching them asking for their papers or to enter their houses for official reasons following several incidents in Zarqa and Amman in which four suspects were apprehended for posing as police officers, assistant director of the Zarqa Police Department Colonel Adnan Abdallat said Wednesday.

"Anyone has the right to ask any police officer who requests to search them or their homes or cars for a police identification card," Col. Abdallat said.

According to Col. Abdallat, the latest arrest took place on Monday, when police apprehended four men in their mid-20s suspected of impersonating police officers and robbing foreign labourers, who the colonel declined to identify, in Zarqa and Amman.

He said the suspects on the first incident posed as officials to workers in Ruseifeh. One of the men was wearing a corporal's uniform and carrying a gun, and the other three, in civil uniform, claimed they were police officers. They told the workers they

were checking work permits and searched their house. During the search operation, they stole \$1,000 and JD 130, he said.

The same day, he said they repeated the crime in the same area, and "this time the men took \$300 and JD 120."

In an earlier incident on Jan. 7, he said, the suspects targeted foreign labourers in Al Ghourieh area in Zarqa, and took JD 120.

He said the victims informed police that the suspects were riding a taxi. "We sealed the area and started looking for a taxi carrying a man wearing a policeman's uniform," said Col. Abdallat.

After an intensive search, police pulled over a taxi and apprehended the suspect after a short chase and an exchange of gunfire between the suspect and police.

Col. Abdallat said the suspect had a criminal record and was unemployed; he said the suspect confessed and identified the other three accomplices.

He said police apprehended the other three and recovered 90 per cent of the stolen money.

In another incident that took place on New Year's Eve, Col. Abdallat said, police apprehended a 35-year-old man who attacked a doctor's residence with an automatic gun in Al Ruseifeh area in Zarqa.

According to Col. Abdallat, the suspect, who was carrying a Kalashnikov and covering his face with a stocking, went to the doctor's house in Zarqa and knocked on the door.

"When the doctor opened the door, the masked man tried to enter his house, but the doctor resisted, and the intruder shot several times but missed the doctor, then fled the scene," Col. Abdallat said.

He added, that upon hearing gun shots, a police unit that was near the scene started chasing the intruder. "He began shooting back at us while police were chasing him, but we eventually arrested him after an exchange of fire, and no one was hurt in the incident," he said.

According to Col. Abdallat, police are questioning the intruder to determine his motives.

"It is possible that the man wanted to steal money from the doctor because he owned a private surgery clinic and also worked at a company," he said.

Col. Abdallat said that the doctor had performed surgery on the suspect four months ago. The official however would not relate the incident to the surgery.

Col. Abdallat did not identify any of the suspects, and said that police were investigating the incident.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

FILMS

- ★ Film entitled "The Accidental Tourist" at the American Center on Thursday at 5:00 p.m.
- ★ Film entitled "Dances Horas" at Instituto Cervantes (the Spanish Cultural Center) on Thursday at 5:00 p.m.

CONCERT

- ★ Concert by Al Isha' Band at the Phoenix Gallery for Culture and Art on Thursday at 6:30 p.m.

POETRY RECITAL

- ★ Poetry recital by Palestinian poet Samih Al Qassim at the Phoenix

Gallery for Culture and Art on Thursday at 7:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Exhibition entitled "Phase II: Doors and Windows" by Jordanian artist Ghada Dahdaleh. Also showing an exhibition by contemporary Arab artists at Darat Al Funun.
- ★ Exhibition of works by Hala Mahayni at the Petra International Hotel in Aqaba.
- ★ Exhibition of abstract art by Zakaria Barakat at the Housing Bank Gallery.
- ★ Exhibition of works by Saad Khalil at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition of paintings by Ismail and Tamam Shammout at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation.

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Orient Express Ltd.
Travel & Tourism

has the pleasure to promote a two day
Camping Desert Safari Trip of Wadi Rum
with the visit to Petra.

Trip dates: Jan. 19, 1995 & Jan. 26, 1995
Details of the camping trip:
- Route: Amman - Wadi Rum - Petra - Amman
- Camping in Bedouin Tents in Wadi Rum
- Two day trip and one night stay in Wadi Rum
- Price per person per trip JD 66.00
- Departure time from Amman at 2:00 p.m.
- Departure time from Petra at 5:00 p.m.
- Program on Half Board basis

For more information, please contact Orient
Express at: 602-460 & 698-969

Food, Fun, Dance & Entertainment
at the Marriott Sports Bar

Saturday Night
Choose & drink from your favorite local beer, wine or any other local brand for only J.D. 1 per drink.
7:00 - 1:00 a.m.

LADIES NIGHT
MADAMES at MADEMOISELLES
A beautiful night dedicated to you. You can dance to our DJ's best selections & get your local drinks for half the price.
7:00 - 1:00 a.m.

Monday Night
All you can eat for as long as you can eat. Enjoy our snacks and hot item buffet free of charge.
7:00 - 1:00 a.m.

Tuesday Quiz Night
Where is the Marriott Sports Bar?
A. In Amman, Jordan
B. At the Marriott Sports Bar
C. At the Marriott Sports Bar
D. At the Marriott Sports Bar
Don't forget your prize.
7:00 - 1:00 a.m.

Friday Sports
Pool & darts tournament.
To compete you've got to be strong, to win you've got to be smart, & to meet the challenge you've got to be a member of the club.
Members Tournament
7:00 - 1:00 a.m.

Thursday Dancing
Let's rumble mumble, let's rock the block, let's samba, let's rap, let's see how you can move it move it. For the minimum charge of JD 3. Couples only.
Hey... Calm down dood.
8:00 p.m. - 2:00 a.m.

Daily Happy Hour
A day's work is over. After a good siesta, welcome the night with a relaxed mood & a happy spirit with a beer for half the price.
7:00 - 1:00 a.m.

AMMAN Marriott
P.O. Box 92333 Amman, Jordan Tel. 62472 Fax 62781

U.S., Pakistan revive security dialogue dormant since 1990

ISLAMABAD (Agencies) — U.S. Defence Secretary William Perry and his Pakistani counterpart Aftab Shaaban Meerani agreed Wednesday to revive a security dialogue dormant since 1990.

A U.S. embassy statement said they had decided to re-visit the U.S.-Pakistani consultative group as a forum for annual discussions on "security issues in the post-cold war era."

"The agenda... would include the exchange of perceptions on regional situations, threat briefings, joint military exercises/training of military officers in both countries, and identification of areas of mutual cooperation," it said.

The group met 10 times after it was set up in 1984 but stopped work after Washington cut off military and economic aid five years ago over Pakistan's alleged nuclear ambitions.

Mr. Perry, who arrived in Pakistan Tuesday, met Air Marshal Farooq Feroze, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, and army chief General Abdul Waheed in Islamabad Wednesday.

He then flew to the north-western city of Peshawar to meet Pakistani troops in the Khyber Pass on the rugged Afghan border.

U.S. Ambassador John Monjo has visited several rival Afghan leaders in the past month to back United Nations efforts to halt a civil war which has cost about 15,000 lives since 1992.

The United States is

alarmed about growth in opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan and Pakistan, the world's second and third biggest producers of opium, from which heroin is made.

According to U.S. estimates, Afghan opium production jumped 39 per cent to 950 tonnes last year from 685 tonnes in 1993. Pakistan's output rose to 160 tonnes from 140 tonnes.

Pakistan, the main conduit for Western support to Afghan Islamic guerrillas fighting Soviet occupation in the 1980s, was the third largest recipient of U.S. aid until 1990.

During his visit, Mr. Perry has also been discussing how the United States and Pakistan can improve cooperation in peacekeeping missions around the world.

A Foreign Ministry spokesman said Mr. Perry had promised that U.S. Marines would provide cover for 6,000 Pakistani U.N. peacekeeping troops when they leave Somalia in March.

He said a force of at least 1,000 U.S. Marines would come ashore in Mogadishu to ensure that the Pakistanis, due to be the last U.N. troops to leave Somalia, can withdraw safely.

U.S. and Pakistani troops served side-by-side — and took casualties — in Somalia, along with other contingents in a U.N. force sent in 1992 to protect humanitarian agencies trying to relieve famine amid civil war in the Horn of Africa country.

Mr. Perry assured Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto when they met Tuesday that Washington would take an even-handed approach towards arch-foes Pakistan and India, a government source said.

He also said he would discuss the strains in relations between the two countries, at loggerheads over Kashmir, during his visit to India which begins Thursday.

Ms. Bhutto said Mr. Perry's visit, the first by a U.S. defence secretary to Pakistan in 12 years, showed U.S.-Pakistani ties were broadening despite differences over nuclear policy.

Mr. Perry arrives in New Delhi Thursday for a three-day visit aimed at forging an Indo-U.S. strategic and military relationship in the post-Cold War era.

Sales of U.S. defence equipment to India's Soviet-equipped armed forces, joint military exercises and India's role in U.N. peacekeeping missions are expected to figure high on the agenda for Mr. Perry's talks here, U.S. officials said.

They said Mr. Perry would stress that with the end of the superpower rivalry, Washington is looking for "even-handed" defence relations with New Delhi and Islamabad.

Persistent tensions between India and Pakistan over Kashmir and U.S. concern over India's nuclear programme would be put on the backburner, they said.

Speaking ahead of Mr. Perry's departure for Islamabad and New Delhi, a senior Defence Department official in Washington said Mr. Perry's visit "is not to address" conflicts between the South Asian rivals.

"We are not going to get into Kashmir and other such contentious regional issues," he said. "The purpose here is to build a defence relationship and build it on a new basis: The Cold War is now over."

"We believe both Pakistan and India are important countries, in their own right and to the United States, and we do not want to see a policy which tilts in the direction of one country or another," the Pentagon official said.

Also Wednesday Pakistani tribesmen dancing in honour of U.S. Defence Secretary William Perry in the Khyber Pass tested his bodyguards' nerves by firing live rounds in the air without warning, witnesses said.

Mr. Perry, on a two-day visit to Pakistan, was watching a display of tribal dancing after lunch at the Khyber Rifles Regimental mess near the rugged Afghan border.

The troupe of a dozen Khattak tribesmen momentarily stunned his security escort by unleashing rhythmic volleys from G-3 assault rifles in time with the music.

"This is a security nightmare," one U.S. official muttered, as Mr. Perry smiled and politely clapped the performance.

Britain wonders: Will Charles divorce Diana to marry Camilla?

LONDON (AFP) — Britain bristled with curiosity Wednesday about the next chapter in the royal family saga after Camilla Parker-Bowles, Prince Charles' long-time girlfriend, announced she and her estranged husband were divorcing.

Would the heir to the throne of England now divorce his own estranged wife, Princess Diana?

And if he did, would he then marry Mrs. Parker-Bowles, with whom he has admitted having had three separate affairs over 25 years?

And if he did, could he still become king?

And if he did, could Mrs. Parker-Bowles become "Queen Camilla?" Coincidentally, it emerged, the Parker-Bowles' secretly began their legal separation barely a month after that of Prince Charles and Princess Diana in December 1992.

British law requires a two-year separation for uncontested divorce.

Prince Charles' aides insisted that no divorce was in the offing.

And experts said there was no constitutional impediment to a divorced prince marrying a divorcee and becoming king.

There were the inevitable comparisons to Edward VIII, who in 1936 won the heart of romantics the world over when, forced by the government to choose, he abdicated the throne to marry American divorcee Wallis Simpson.

Margaret Holder, who has written extensively on the royal family, noted the "huge similarities," saying, "We are moving towards the same situation."

"The first ball started rolling then with the Simpsons' divorce and now we have the Parker-Bowles' divorce," she said, adding it only remained for the Charles-Diana divorce to be "rubber-stamped."

"Everyone will be wondering whether he will inflict



A file picture dated Jan. 6, 1994 shows Camilla Parker-Bowles, a close friend of the Prince of Wales, and her husband Andrew (AFP photo)

Camilla on the country as queen, which is as unlikely as a prospect as "Queen Wallis" was in 1936," said Ms. Holder.

But would Prince Charles follow King Edward's example and renounce power, fame and fortune for love? Not likely, they said.

More probably, they said, Prince Charles would seek to avail himself of the more relaxed social codes of the late 20th century and have his cake and eat it.

Should the royal couple divorce, said observers, Prince Charles would likely continue seeing Mrs. Parker-Bowles, but without benefit of holy matrimony.

There were serious considerations. A royal marriage is primarily an event of state involving the government,

the opposition, the Anglican Church of which the monarch is head, and the Commonwealth, in which the monarch is head of state of 14 countries.

It would concern Prince Charles' mother, Queen Elizabeth II, whose consent would be required.

But, in an era where the monarchy has come under unprecedented criticism, with one Briton out of two doubtful it can survive another 50 years, public opinion will probably be the chief determining factor in what Prince Charles does.

"The country is ready for a divorced monarch, but not a remarried monarch," said Nigel Evans, editor of Majesty magazine.

"I don't think the country is ready for Camilla to be the next queen," he said.

U.S. tells Russia it will test new weapons

WASHINGTON (R) — The United States notified Russia Tuesday that it will begin testing a tactical missile defence system next month, even though talks with Moscow on the issue have not been completed, the Washington Post reported Wednesday.

The paper quoted senior officials as saying similar notification had been sent to Congress, where key members of both parties have their own reservations about the short-range missile defence programme.

Development of the so-called Theatre High Altitude Area Defence System, or THAAD, is a cornerstone of

President Bill Clinton's administration's military planning and officials hope to resume negotiations with Moscow in March on how to reconcile the system with the 1972 anti-ballistic missile treaty.

Democrats fear deployment of the system could violate the treaty, while Republicans are concerned that negotiations with Russia could result in restrictions that would bar development of still more advanced systems.

Senior House Republicans asked President Clinton last week to suspend the negotiations with Russia until they could review the entire issue.

including a possible revival of the so-called Star Wars programme.

The paper said the administration officials were confident 14 flight tests of THAAD planned over the next two years would not violate the ABM treaty or breach any agreement with Russia, because they are demonstration tests and not tests of a complete system that could process data from space-based sensors.

If "quoted" White House officials as saying Mr. Clinton ordered the tests to proceed after accepting a Defence Department finding that they will be legal under the treaty.

Indian gas well blaze rages for 4th day

HYDERABAD, India (R) — A scorching blaze in a gas well burned out of control for the fourth day Wednesday, reaching 500 degrees Celsius (930 degrees Fahrenheit), as Indian authorities awaited the arrival of a crack U.S. firefighting team.

State-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corp (ONGC) said efforts to put out the fire in the well, in the southern state of Andhra Pradesh, were hampered by the intense heat.

"The scorching heat is felt even from a distance of half a kilometre (a third of a mile)," said A.M. Bhat, an ONGC official who is supervising firefighting operations.

The well is next to the remote Bodasakurru village in the coastal east Godavari District, about 500 kilometres east of the state capital, Hyderabad.

"The fire is in an area of five to 10 square metres and the flames are still rising up to 100 metres into the sky," Mr. Bhat said.

The fire erupted Sunday evening as gas erupted from a depth of 2,777 metres (9,110 feet) during a drilling operation.

Hot, black, billowing smoke singed nearby coconut groves and turned lush green paddy fields to grey, residents said.

Spain's Socialists take legal action over claims it led dirty war

MADRID (AFP) — Spain's Socialist government went to court to battle allegations it set up hit squads to kill Basque separatists in the 1980s, filing a libel suit against the failed former politician behind the accusations.

Facing one of the most serious political crises in its 12 years in power, the Socialist government "is exercising its right to self-defence," said Secretary of State for Justice Maria Teresa Fernandez de Vega.

The suit, filed late Tuesday, targets Jose Amedo, a former policeman who accused the government of being behind the creation of the Anti-terrorist Liberation Groups (GAL), which killed 24 suspected Basque separat-

ists in a series of terrorist attacks.

But Judge Fernandez de Vega said the government was also considering taking libel action against the leader and a deputy of the opposition United Left coalition who accused Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez of personal involvement in the creation of GAL.

Mr. Amedo, who unleashed the uproar with allegations made in a series of interviews with the newspaper El Mundo, was sentenced in 1991 to 108 years in prison for involvement in six attempted murders organised by the GAL.

Mr. Gonzalez denied any involvement in GAL activities in a televised address

Monday night, saying he had never "authorised or tolerated" the actions of the GAL and would file suit against anyone who claims otherwise.

Mr. Gonzalez also denied any intention of calling early elections as urged by the right-wing opposition Popular Party.

But public support does not seem to be on his side according to the latest poll published Wednesday in the daily El Pais.

The survey indicated that 52 per cent of Spaniards think Mr. Gonzalez is lying when he says his government was not involved with the GAL and 49 per cent favour early elections, compared to 36 per cent who wanted new polls.

Christopher denies he will resign

WASHINGTON (R) — U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher Tuesday denied fresh rumours he was planning to resign but privately, U.S. officials said he wanted to do so at the end of 1994 but had been dissuaded by the White House.

"I'll just repeat and bore you with the same answer I've given many times before," Mr. Christopher told a brief news conference ahead of talks with Japanese Deputy Prime Minister Yoshi Kono.

"I have a very important agenda for next year which I'm committed to and I'm working hard on. I'm doing extensive consultations on Capitol Hill to try to be able to carry out this agenda in the new bipartisan circumstances that exist," he said, referring to the Republican-controlled Congress.

"So I just have to say... the rumours of my imminent departure are neither new nor accurate," he added.

The Boston Globe, in a front-page story, said Christopher told his closest aides before Christmas he intended soon to leave the job he has described as the capstone of his career.

A White House official

told Reuters that after two difficult years as secretary of state in which he endured often withering criticism, Mr. Christopher in December was indeed "mulling over his future, assessing where he stood... it was not clear he was staying."

But the White House, which is making a major effort to get Bill Clinton's endangered presidency back on track with a renewed focus on domestic issues, "doesn't want to deal with this. They aren't interested in talking about Christopher's departure," he said.

Meanwhile, strengthening his hand for the 1996 election, President Clinton plans to put the battered Democratic Party under an ally who would help him fight the coming political wars, the White House said Tuesday.

In a strategic move similar to one Republican President Ronald Reagan made in the 1980s, Mr. Clinton would have Democratic Sen. Christopher Dodd of Connecticut, a seasoned and witty veteran of Washington politics, serve as part-time "general chairman" and overseer of the party.

Mr. Clinton planned to name Don Fowler, a former chief of South Carolina,

as traditional "national chairman" running the party's day-to-day operations.

The choice of Sen. Dodd was a clear signal of how the president means to re-establish his grip over a party demoralised by its election defeat in November last year, when it lost control of Congress to the Republicans for the first time in 40 years.

Mr. Clinton needs to whip the party into fighting shape for what could be an uphill run for his own re-election. The Democrats have been without a leader since year's end, when the resignation of former Chairman David Wilhelm, who had been criticised for ineffectiveness, took effect.

Mr. Reagan, in the 1980s, elevated Nevada Sen. Paul Laxalt, a close personal friend and conservative soulmate, to a similar "general chairman" post in the Republican hierarchy.

While Mr. Clinton's choice of Sen. Dodd was not an exact parallel — Sen. Dodd being much more the feisty activist than Sen. Laxalt — it was the same sort of move, tailored to Mr. Clinton's needs for an energetic and trustworthy ally and field general.

Manila police arrest protesters at Papal residence

MANILA (R) — Police arrested 21 women staging a protest outside the residence of Pope John Paul II Wednesday on the eve of Pope John Paul II's visit to the Philippines.

The women had wanted to present a letter to the Pope urging him to seek the release of 291 political prisoners detained in Philippine jails.

Dozens of the prisoners have been on a hunger-strike for nine days demanding they be freed.

The Pope is to arrive in Manila Thursday for a four-day visit at the start of a four-nation Asia-Pacific tour.

"We urge you as the leader of one of the most powerful churches in the world today to listen to the voices of hundreds of prisoners of conscience still languishing in jail," said the demonstrators, who belong to the militant women's group Gabriela.

The prisoners, most of whom belong to leftist groups, have accused the government of unjustly detaining them by charging them with common crimes, such as murder.

Philippine police have arrested two people suspected of posing a threat to the security of Pope John Paul II, President Fidel Ramos said Wednesday.

Mr. Ramos neither named the suspects nor gave their nationalities, saying only that further details would be disclosed later.

"A certain threat has been uncovered, a couple of people have been arrested with incriminating evidence," Mr. Ramos told his weekly news conference.

Manila newspapers, quoting police sources, said a Pakistani was arrested at the weekend while making bombs he planned to use in an attempt to kill the 74-year-old Pontiff.

The Pope is to arrive in Manila Thursday at the start of a gruelling 33,415-kilometre Asia-Pacific trip also taking in Papua New Guinea, Australia and Sri Lanka.

In Manila, he will take part in the celebration of World Youth Day, when up to a million young people from dozens of nations will listen to his message Sunday.

Mr. Ramos said the government had mustered a security force of 20,000 police to protect the Pope and the youth delegates.

"We have assured the holy father and his delegation and all his admirers, supporters and friends all over the world that the holy father will be safe during his visit to the Philippines," Mr. Ramos said.

Newspapers said police seized four bombs and a priest's robes from the apartment of the arrested Pakistani, who reportedly arrived in the Philippines on Dec. 6.

Residents of the building said police were alerted Friday night when smoke began to leak out of the Pakistan's sixth floor room.

Police also found bomb-making equipment, timing devices, several Bibles and a picture of the Pontiff inside, the newspapers said.

The apartment building is about 300 metres from the residence of the Vatican's envoy to the Philippines, where the Pontiff is to stay during his visit. It stands on one of the possible routes the Pope may

use when he travels from the residence of Luneta Park to address the Youth Day delegates and celebrate mass.

Police and intelligence officials have so far declined to confirm the newspaper reports.

The government recently alerted its embassies abroad to be on the lookout for 109 suspected terrorists who might try to come to the Philippines during the Pope's four-day visit.

Officials said the 109 names were provided by the Vatican.

The Pope will be travelling around Manila in a locally built "Popemobile" capable of withstanding attack by hand grenades and machine guns, officials said.

They say the deployment of the 20,000-strong security force around the Pope will make him the most tightly guarded foreign dignitary ever to visit Asia's only mainly Christian nation.

The Security deployment is much larger than that mustered for other heads of state, including U.S. President Bill Clinton, who visited Manila last year, police Colonel Jose Bandong said.

Mensa chapter under fire for 'Nazi' essays

LOS ANGELES (AFP) — A local chapter of Mensa, the U.S. organisation for people with high IQs, has sparked outrage for publishing articles advocating the extermination of homeless, retarded and old people. Some of the chapter's 2,000 members wrote angry letters after essays appeared in the November issue of Mensa's newsletter called "Lament." "We have these Nazi ideas being published in a publication that goes everywhere," Betty Schneider said. "I don't want to be identified with an organisation that does this type of thing," she said. One essay in "Lament" said: "A piece of meat in the shape of a man but without a mind is not a human being, whether the body be deathly ill, damaged by accident, mentally blank because of brain deficiency, or criminally insane. Those people who are so mentally defective that they cannot live in society should, as soon as they are identified as defective, be humanely dispatched." The American Mensa Society accepts only people whose IQ is in the top 2 per cent of the population.

15-year-old girl arrested for pimping

TAIPEI (AFP) — A 15-year-old Taiwanese girl has been arrested here for running a prostitution ring, police said Wednesday. The girl, identified only as "Lee" because she is a minor, was sent to a juvenile court Wednesday on charges of setting up a company called the "Night Kingdom" last November as a front for prostitution. The suspect allegedly arranged for four of her female employees to entertain customers at two unlicensed bars, skimming 15 per cent of the money earned by the employees, who were all older than her. Police said that after her arrest Tuesday, the girl maintained that she did not violate the law and was just running a normal business. Prostitution is banned in Taiwan.

3-year-old boy expelled from school for sexual abuse

LONDON (AFP) — A three-year-old boy was expelled from an exclusive nursery school for having sexually molested a three-year-old classmate, it emerged Tuesday. The child was summarily kicked out of the Rose Hill School in Cotswolds, Gloucestershire, after he allegedly touched a classmate's genitals and asked her for sex, according to a High Court civil suit. The suit was brought by the boy's parents who contend the dismissal was unjustified that they were not given a chance to respond to the allegations and who are seeking their son's reinstatement plus damages. According to the court writ, the girl's mother had complained to headmaster Richard Lyne-Parks that the boy had "interfered" with her daughter and asked for sex. The next day, said the suit, Mr. Lyne-Parks expelled the boy. In a telephone interview with the Daily Express, the headmaster confirmed that the 163-year-old school was facing legal action over the expulsion, but declined to discuss details. "For a school of our probity to take the action that was taken was not done without full due legal consultation," he told the Express. "These things are exceedingly difficult and exceedingly delicate." Jackie Miller, of the Professional Association of Teachers, said, "I can't believe a three-year-old is capable of deliberately doing this. He has clearly seen something he shouldn't have had access to and is copying it."

Chinese spend \$1.2b on cosmetics

SHANGHAI (AFP) — Chinese consumers are becoming increasingly conscious of their looks, spending 10 billion yuan (\$1.19 billion) on cosmetics last year, a newspaper reported Tuesday. But Chinese women are also baffled at the wide choice available and find shop assistants little help, the Youth Daily said. The newspaper quoted experts as saying that Chinese people had just begun to spend money on beauty and skincare products and most consumers were still ignorant about skincare.

Mensa chapter under fire for Nazi essays

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A chapter of the Mensa organization, an elite group of high IQs, has been accused of publishing essays advocating the extermination of Jews, blacks and other minorities. The chapter's 2,000 members wrote angry letters to the publisher of the newsletter, saying the essays were "a disgrace to the organization." The publisher, a man named Lee, said he had no idea the essays were in the newsletter. He said he had no idea the essays were in the newsletter. He said he had no idea the essays were in the newsletter.

5-year-old girl arrested for pimping

ATLANTA (AP) — A 5-year-old girl has been arrested for pimping. The girl, who is named Lee, was arrested by police in Atlanta. She is accused of pimping out other children. The girl's mother, who is named Lee, is also accused of pimping out other children. The girl's mother, who is named Lee, is also accused of pimping out other children.

1-year-old boy expelled from school for sexual abuse

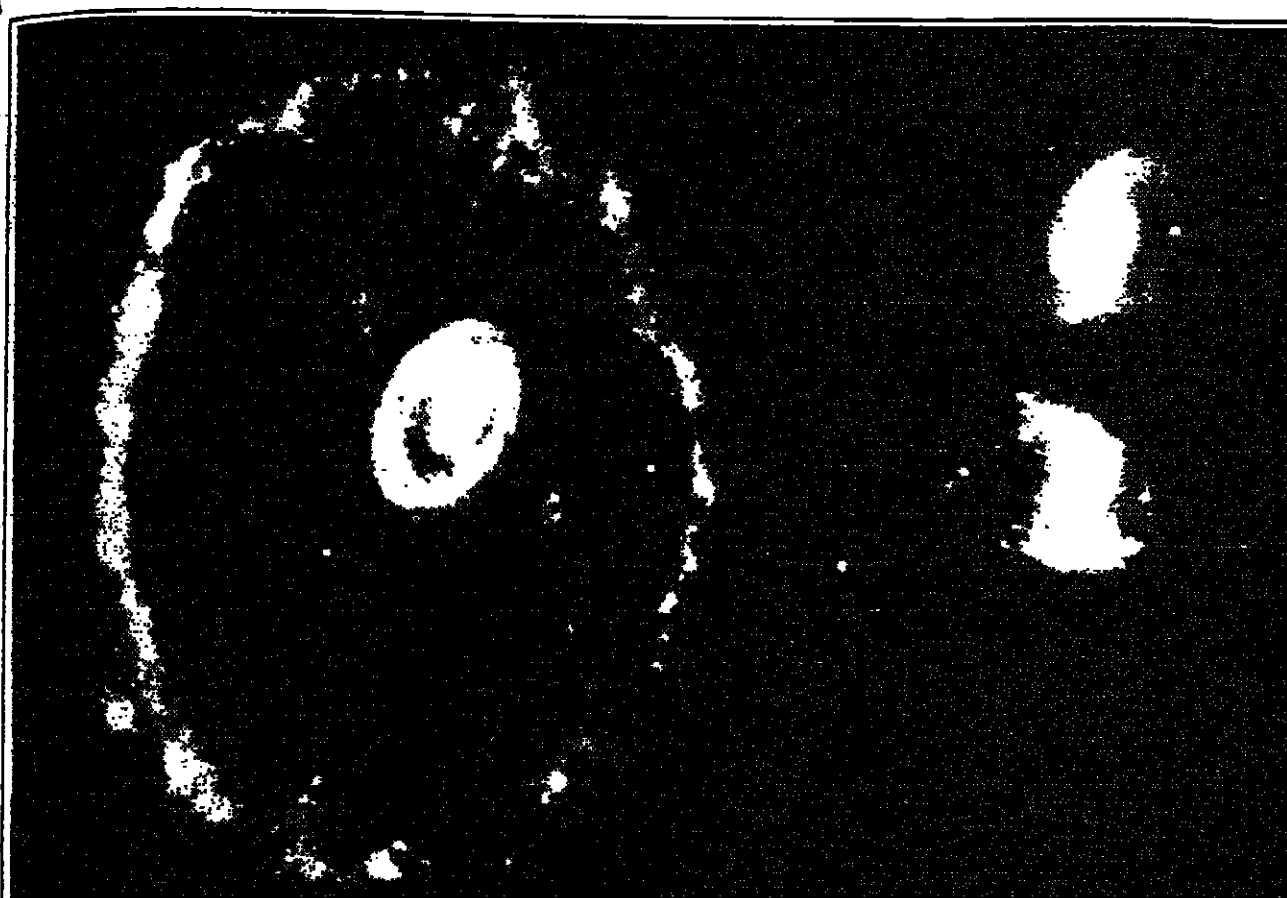
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GALAXIES COLLIDE: This Hubble space telescope image released by National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) shows a head-on collision between two galaxies in a true color image of the Cartwheel Galaxy, located 500-million light years from Earth in the constellation Sculptor. According to NASA the ring-like appearance is a direct result of an intruder galaxy "possibly one of the two objects to the right of the ring" that passed through the core of the host galaxy (AFP photo)

Colombo accused of breaking truce pact

COLOMBO (Agencies) — Sri Lanka's separatist Tamil Tigers accused the government Wednesday of violating a truce pact by restricting fishing in the troubled northern waters, as a cabinet minister called for a permanent ceasefire.

The rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) said over their clandestine radio, the Voice of Tigers, that President Chandrika Kumaratunga's government violated their agreement by not totally lifting a ban on fishing.

"We agreed to keep away from army and navy camps in the northeast... But the government has violated the agreement by limiting fishing for 12 hours during daytime," the radio said in a broadcast monitored by Tamil civilians.

The Tigers said their chief negotiator, Thamil Chelvam, who is also the head of the LTTE political section, had already lodged a protest with the head of the government peace team, Kusumisi Balapatabendi.

Following the truce agreement, which went into effect Sunday, the navy declared areas where fishing could be carried out in shallow waters. However, a ban on deep sea fishing was not lifted.

The Tiger protest came as Energy Minister Anuraudha Ratwatte expressed the hope that the government would be able to establish a permanent "cessation of hostilities" with Tigers who have been battling for independence since 1972.

A third round of talks between the government and the LTTE is scheduled for Saturday in the Tiger-held northern Jaffna peninsula.

Mr. Ratwatte said the truce was holding satisfactorily and the government would shortly name two monitoring committees headed by Norwegian nationals to observe the pact.

"We will have two more committees when the Canadian representatives arrive here in the next 72 hours," Mr. Ratwatte told reporters here Wednesday. He said Colombo was awaiting nominees from the Netherlands.

Mr. Ratwatte, who is also the deputy minister of defence under Mrs. Kumaratunga, said the government believed it could extend the "cessation of hostilities" with the Tigers.

The pact signed by Mrs. Kumaratunga and LTTE supreme Velupillai Prabhakaran gave no time limit for the truce, but Mrs. Kumaratunga declared Friday that it could initially be for two weeks.

"We are convinced that the LTTE is doing its best to ensure that their cadres observe the cessation of hostilities agreement," Mr. Ratwatte said adding that violations so far had been minor.

In the eastern Batticaloa district, the top security force commander Major General H.S. Hapuarachchi met with LTTE area leader Karikalan at a Roman Catholic Church

Wednesday, defence officials said.

"They had a brief meeting to discuss ways of avoiding accidental violations of the pact. Both had tea and it was a cordial meeting," the official said.

The military has listed as the main violation a grenade attack on their troops outside the northeastern Weli Oya army camp Tuesday. Mr. Ratwatte denied the army fired back but defence sources said there was a 15-minute firefight.

Military commanders have privately expressed concern over construction activity along Tiger defence lines, especially in the island's northern province where the rebels have been enjoying an advantage over security forces.

Meanwhile unidentified attackers set fire to a shrine room and damaged statues of the Buddha at a temple outside Sri Lanka's capital Colombo Wednesday, a day after a fire at a Catholic Church.

Some residents linked the temple attack and the church fire to Pope John Paul's visit this month and Buddhist anger over his comments on their religion in his best-selling book.

But Inspector-General of Police Frank Silva denied there was any connection. "I can't read any connection. It has not been established by the evidence received so far of the two incidents," he told reporters.

Seoul wants flexible policy on N. Korea

SEOUL (Agencies) — President Kim Young-Sam said Wednesday South Korea would adopt a "flexible and creative" attitude towards North Korea to help promote talks and exchanges between the two rivals.

Mr. Kim, in a meeting with security-related cabinet ministers to discuss his administration's 1995 policies, said the North might pursue a policy of confrontation with the South this year to try to drive a wedge between Seoul and Washington.

"We will resolutely cope with this. But we need to take a flexible and creative attitude towards North Korea so that practical inter-Korean dialogue and exchanges can be realised to meet the world trend of easing tensions in the post-cold war era," Mr. Kim was quoted by his spokesman as telling the meeting.

The most important goal in our diplomacy is to secure peace and stability on the Korean peninsula and open the way for peaceful unification," Mr. Kim said.

Unification Minister Kim Deok said in his report to President Kim the South would seek to expand economic cooperation with Pyongyang and was ready to back the North's bid to develop economic ties with the rest of the world.

"We will extend cooperation in case the North seeks to join international economic organisations such as ADB (Asian Development Bank) and IBRD (International Bank for Reconstruction and Development)," Mr. Kim Deok said.

Defence Minister Lee Yag-Ho said the North might commit military provocation against the South if Kim Jong-Il's administration

which would carry a total of 50,000 tonnes of bunker C oil from the port of Yochon, 300 kilometres south of Seoul, to the northeastern North Korean port of Sonbong.

The tanker is expected to leave Thursday while a second ship, the Liberian-registered Lark Lake, will leave Friday, the company official said.

North Korea Monday announced it would open its ports to U.S. shipping and cargo.

In Washington, three-way talks between the United States, South Korea and Japan resumed Monday on providing North Korea with new nuclear technology.

Former U.S. Ambassador to Seoul James Lilly and three other American experts including a U.S.-based Korean professor will visit North Korea Saturday, Yonhap News Agency said Wednesday.

"I've learned that a North Korean institute has asked Mr. Lilly, former ambassador and three experts including a Korean professor in the United States to visit Pyongyang," Yonhap quoted a South Korean government official as saying.

The North's invitation, reportedly by an academic institute, was interpreted here as a step to accelerate the pace of rapprochement between Washington and Pyongyang, kicked off by the landmark Oct. 21 Geneva nuclear agreement.

The U.S. delegation, during their one-week stay in Pyongyang, was likely to stress the importance of progress in inter-Korean dialogue as well as fulfillment of the nuclear accord, the South Korean official was quoted as saying.

A spokesman for Honam Oil Refinery Co Ltd said the 67,436-deadweight tonne Da Qing was one of two tankers

since 1972.

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U.N., contact group push on with Bosnia peace process

SARAJEVO (R) — United Nations officials and mediators from the international "contact group" on Bosnia sought to push forward the faltering peace process Wednesday as the latest ceasefire came under increasing pressure.

Officials from the five contact group nations — the United States, Russia, Germany, Britain and France — were scheduled to meet Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic in Belgrade before heading for Sarajevo and the Bosnian Serb stronghold of Pale.

At Sarajevo Airport, army commanders from the Serb, Croat and Muslim armies met under the chairmanship of the U.N. military commander in Bosnia, Lieutenant-General Sir Michael Rose, in an attempt to put the ceasefire process back on track.

The four-month cessation of hostilities agreement signed on Dec. 31 has been threatened by an interminable row between the Serbs and the Muslim-led Bosnian government army over the status of a demilitarised zone near Sarajevo.

The United Nations had despatched yet another foot patrol to the Mount Igman demilitarised zone to verify whether government troops had vacated it as promised under the truce.

U.N. sources said 151 Bosnian troops were caught inside the zone by a U.N. patrol Monday night after government leaders had insisted the withdrawal had been completed.

U.N. military spokesman Major Herve Gourmelon said the ceasefire was generally holding in most of Bosnia, except for the northwestern enclave of Bihać.

U.N. observers counted 200 artillery explosions and a similar number of small arms bursts around Velika Kladusa in the north of the Bihać pocket, marking a sharp resurgence of fighting there.

The clashes appeared to pit the Bosnian government army against Muslim rebels under warlord Fikret Abdic but not rebel Krajina Serbs from Croatia who were previously involved.

"We have indications, although they are not yet confirmed because our observers can't move around freely, that the Krajina Serbs have withdrawn progressively from the area over the past few days," Maj. Gourmelon said.

A U.N. official in the enclave told Reuters sporadic artillery and small arms fire could be heard Wednesday.

Other incidents elsewhere in Bosnia made clear that the ceasefire agreement was already showing signs of strain.

Increased Bosnian government troop movements were noticed in southwestern Bosnia, in the Mostar region in particular.

Tensions rose around the U.N.-protected Muslim enclave of Srebrenica in eastern Bosnia when Bosnian Serbs started moving troops close to front lines.

"This provoked small arms fire from the Bosnian government side," Maj. Gourmelon told reporters.

He also said Bosnian government troops were blocking the U.N.-controlled Tuzla airfield in northern Bosnia in a protest over the stationing of a Serb liaison officer there under terms of the truce accord.

He said government soldiers were violating the spirit of the deal signed by their high command which provided in part for the presence of Serb liaison officers in U.N. compounds situated within government territory.

"Both warring parties agreed to an exchange of liaison officers. This situation is unacceptable," Maj. Gourmelon said.

The contact group envoys agreed on their trip to Serbia and Bosnia after a meeting in Paris where they heard a report from U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Richard Holbrooke, who held tough talks with Bosnian government leaders earlier this week.

The mood was one of determination to give the peace process another last heave, a diplomat in Paris said.

In Washington, the State Department denied Tuesday that there were differences with the Bosnian government over the peace plan. It insisted that Bosnia's Serbs must accept the international plan for the future of the Balkan republic before fresh negotiations could begin between the warring factions.

The "contact group" and the United Nations hope the ceasefire, which went into effect 11 days ago, will take root and help produce a resumption of negotiations.

The Bosnian government and the U.S. embassy in Sarajevo were unable to confirm speculation that former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, who brokered the ceasefire when he visited Bosnia last month, would return to the region this week.

Meanwhile Croatia's Prime Minister Nikica Valentic said Wednesday Croatia will not extend the mandate of the U.N. Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in the third of its country occupied by Serbs when it expires at the end of January.

Croatia's interpretation of the mandate differs from that of the United Nations Security Council, which says it runs until the end of March after being renewed for six months on Sept. 30.

Mr. Valentic's government has approved UNPROFOR's mandate in the Krajina region of Croatia that is occupied by the Serbs until Jan. 31 but will not extend it beyond that date, Mr. Valentic told a news conference during a five-day visit to China.

"The UNPROFOR has not fulfilled its task there," he said. "What the UNPROFOR is doing in Croatia is to maintain the status quo, actually providing aid to the Serbs through giving oil and food to them."

"Under such circumstances, we cannot agree to the renewal of the mandate."

Under the Security Council resolution, U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali must give a progress report by Jan. 20 on what has been done to implement plans to reunite Croatia with the region occupied by the Serbs.

The Security Council also promised to consider this month a review of the mandate.

On Thursday Croatian President Franjo Tudjman will make a detailed statement to Dr. Ghali on the UNPROFOR issue, Mr. Valentic said.

Zagreb wants to resume control of Krajina and is angry with UNPROFOR because it has not been able to do so.

The decision not to extend the mandate does not mean Croatia has chosen war, Mr. Valentic said, adding that both Serbia and Croatia know the consequence of war. He was referring to their bitter 1991 conflict during the collapse of the former Yugoslavia.

Speaking of Bosnia, Mr. Valentic said all parties — especially Serbia and Montenegro — must reach a peaceful political settlement in the remaining three and a half months of the four-month ceasefire.

"If not, there is a danger of an escalation of the conflict which might extend to the whole former Yugoslavia or even outside," he said.

U.N. official in the enclave told Reuters sporadic artillery and small arms fire could be heard Wednesday.

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Croatia's interpretation of the mandate differs from that of the United Nations Security Council, which says it runs until the end of March after being renewed for six months on Sept. 30.

Mr. Valentic's government has approved UNPROFOR's mandate in the Krajina region of Croatia that is occupied by the Serbs until Jan. 31 but will not extend it beyond that date, Mr. Valentic told a news conference during a five-day visit to China.

"The UNPROFOR has not fulfilled its task there," he said. "What the UNPROFOR is doing in Croatia is to maintain the status quo, actually providing aid to the Serbs through giving oil and food to them."

"Under such circumstances, we cannot agree to the renewal of the mandate."

Under the Security Council resolution, U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali must give a progress report by Jan. 20 on what has been done to implement plans to reunite Croatia with the region occupied by the Serbs.

The Security Council also promised to consider this month a review of the mandate.

On Thursday Croatian President Franjo Tudjman will make a detailed statement to Dr. Ghali on the UNPROFOR issue, Mr. Valentic said.

Zagreb wants to resume control of Krajina and is angry with UNPROFOR because it has not been able to do so.

The decision not to extend the mandate does not mean Croatia has chosen war, Mr. Valentic said, adding that both Serbia and Croatia know the consequence of war. He was referring to their bitter 1991 conflict during the collapse of the former Yugoslavia.

Speaking of Bosnia, Mr. Valentic said all parties — especially Serbia and Montenegro — must reach a peaceful political settlement in the remaining three and a half months of the four-month ceasefire.

"If not, there is a danger of an escalation of the conflict which might extend to the whole former Yugoslavia or even outside," he said.

U.N. official in the enclave told Reuters sporadic artillery and small arms fire could be heard Wednesday.

Other incidents elsewhere in Bosnia made clear that the ceasefire agreement was already showing signs of strain.

Increased Bosnian government troop movements were noticed in southwestern Bosnia, in the Mostar region in particular.

Tensions rose around the U.N.-protected Muslim enclave of Srebrenica in eastern Bosnia when Bosnian Serbs started moving troops close to front lines.

"This provoked small arms fire from the Bosnian government side," Maj. Gourmelon told reporters.

He also said Bosnian government troops were blocking the U.N.-controlled Tuzla airfield in northern Bosnia in a protest over the stationing of a Serb liaison officer there under terms of the truce accord.

He said government soldiers were violating the spirit of the deal signed by their high command which provided in part for the presence of Serb liaison officers in U.N. compounds situated within government territory.

"Both warring parties agreed to an exchange of liaison officers. This situation is unacceptable," Maj. Gourmelon said.

The contact group envoys agreed on their trip to Serbia and Bosnia after a meeting in Paris where they heard a report from U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Richard Holbrooke, who held tough talks with Bosnian government leaders earlier this week.

The mood was one of determination to give the peace process another last heave, a diplomat in Paris said.

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Former Rwandan soldiers raid fishing village

KIGALI (R) — Soldiers loyal to Rwanda's ousted government raided a remote fishing village Wednesday in the first big attack since they fled into exile last July, a U.N. spokesman said.

They were driven back into Zaire after a two-hour gun battle with government troops, Captain Stephane Grenier told reporters.

About 50 armed men attacked Nyamashoke in southwest Rwanda and ambushed 20 fishermen, he said.

Capt. Grenier gave no casualty details but said up to six Rwandan fishermen were missing and several boats were stolen by the retreating gunmen.

The commander of the U.N. Assistant Mission in Rwanda, Major-General Guy Tounsiang, said the attack could signal the start of a "well-consolidated and well-planned insurgency campaign" by the exiled troops.

About 30,000 troops and 10,000 militiamen of the former Hutu-led government fled to Zaire when rebels of the Rwanda Patriotic Front seized power in July after a three-month war.

They are blamed for the genocide of an estimated one million Rwandans, most of them from the Tutsi minority, between April and July.

U.N. officials and foreign aid workers say they are controlling refugee camps inside Zaire to use as bases for a new war.

Meanwhile the Rwandan government is threatening to expel more than 60 international aid agencies that fled to the country after last year's war, massacres and refugee crisis.

A senior government official said they had failed to register with the government by a deadline set for Monday.

Christine Matone, director of the ministry co-ordinating the relief effort, said the government had a right to know who was working in the country.

"The government had no capacity to regulate NGOs (non-governmental organisations) in the emergency period and we could not let the people suffer so we let the NGOs in," Ms. Matone told Reuters.

"Now we are ready to co-ordinate their activities, not just for our benefit but for their as well. We have to prioritise aid delivery and to do that we must know who is operating."

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Pro-Balladur minister accuses Chirac of 'demagoguery'

PARIS (Agencies) — The opening shots of the French presidential campaign were fired Wednesday after a minister who backs likely frontrunner Edouard Balladur accused his main rival Jacques Chirac of "demagoguery" electioneering.

Defence Minister Francois Leotard was immediately accused of being Mr. Balladur's "mud-slinger" after the attack on Mr. Chirac's comments on scrapping national service.

Prime Minister Balladur and Paris Mayor Chirac are seen as the likely main candidates in the two-round April/May polls to replace Socialist President Francois Mitterrand.

Mr. Leotard's comments, not his first on the subject but his first directly targeting Mr. Chirac, sparked an immediate rebuke Wednesday morning by the defence spokesman of Chirac's Rally For the Republic (RPR) party.

Pierre Lellouche said Mr. Leotard "is confusing the post of defence minister with that of mud-slinger of the Matignon (Balladur's office) in the presidential campaign."

Mr. Chirac launched the row Tuesday by calling for national service in the French armed service to be phased out, to be replaced by a professional army "within five to 10 years."

The neo-Gaullist leader, who announced his candidacy for the presidentials in November, has been trailing Mr. Balladur in opinion polls. The premier is expected to declare next week.

Mr. Leotard immediately attacked Mr. Chirac's proposal, saying it was only being brought up for electoral gain, and would be far too expensive, and would not be able to be properly equipped.

Despite his avowed support for Mr. Balladur in the race to replace Mr. Mitterrand, he continued: "I am indifferent to the interests of whichever candidate... what I'm concerned about is the interest of France."

"I don't think you can win an election by flattering people," he added.

The exchange was seen as the first gloves-off tussle at a ministerial level in the three-month campaign expected to be launched in earnest when Mr. Balladur formally announces his candidacy next week, possibly as early as Wednesday.

"By accusing Jacques Chirac of demagoguery about proposed reforms in national service, Francois Leotard does no honour to the office he holds," Mr. Lellouche added in a statement. Mr. Lellouche is a diplomatic advisor to Mr. Chirac on defence issues.

Meanwhile, another row was brewing in the Chirac and Balladur camps Wednesday — over the financing of the two candidates' campaigns. Both are members of the RPR — but Mr. Chirac was its head until announcing his presidential ambitions.

On Wednesday RPR deputy head Jean-Jacques de Peretti, a Chirac supporter, rejected a proposal by a pro-Balladur RPR deputy for the party to fund both candidates' campaigns on an equal basis.

"I find that extraordinary," he said, arguing that 90 per cent of the federations which make up the RPR had expressed support for Mr. Chirac, who was therefore the official candidate.

"We have created an association to fund the campaign of Jacques Chirac... I believe that is the way the candidates must do it," he added, accusing Mr. Balladur of trying to "steal the treasure" of the RPR.

Meanwhile, Mr. Balladur, hitting back at Mr. Chirac, said Tuesday his government had carried out more reforms than any administration for decades.

Surfing on a tidal wave of opinion polls ahead of the expected announcement of his presidential Candidacy next week, Mr. Balladur used a new year press reception to strike back at Mr. Chirac's charges of immobility and timid conservatism.

Without mentioning the Paris mayor by name, the prime minister challenged critics to say "whether there has been a more reformist government in France for many dozens of years."

Oozing self-confidence, Mr. Balladur said there could be no dispute that the French economy was in a better state than when he took office in April 1992.

"France is getting better. It is just a start and it is not yet sufficient, but it seems to me that we have taken the right direction and many things have changed," he said.

He cited the return of economic growth, the stabilisation of unemployment, albeit at a near

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Track in trouble

In light of the recent killing of nine Palestinians at the hands of Israeli security forces, the failure of the latest Israeli-Palestinian negotiations in Cairo came as no surprise to observers. What made the latest killings even more ominous is the fact that Israeli undercover agents were deployed to seek out Palestinians opposed to the PLO-Israeli peace accord and liquidate them. This Israeli posture will surely undermine the legitimacy of the Palestine National Authority (PNA) and make a mockery of self-rule negotiations. With the Palestinian elections still off the target date agreed upon by the two sides, redeployment of Israeli soldiers nowhere in sight and settlement activity still continuing, it would seem that the Palestinian-Israeli track is once again dangerously stalemated.

We would like nothing better than to see negotiations restarting in earnest between Israeli and Palestinian teams on the basis and in the spirit of their 1993 Oslo accord. But it appears that outside intervention has become necessary to put the Palestinian-Israeli talks on track again. Left alone, the parties would only drift further apart, to a point probably beyond redemption. Before anything is done, however, Israelis must cease and desist from taking the lives of Palestinians on a systematic basis, and they must stop their colonisation programme in the West Bank. Institutionalisation of state terrorism and continued expropriation of Palestinian land are the last thing the parties need, especially in view of the precarious situation and negative climate that exist in the region generally.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

IBRAHIM AL ABSI, a writer in Al Ra'i, Wednesday strongly attacked Israel for delaying the implementation of the Oslo agreement with the Palestinians. If after two years on the signing of the Oslo deal, Israel is still dragging its feet on redeploying its forces and paving the ground for the Palestine National Authority to take over the responsibility for the Palestinian people, we wonder when will the Rabin government be ready to implement the final phase of that deal, granting the Palestinians a greater measure of freedom and enabling them to run their own affairs, said the writer. It is clear to all that Israel, through its continued occupation of Arab lands, its repressive measures against the Palestinians, and through its blockade imposed on Jerusalem and the rest of the occupied West Bank and the Gaza Strip, is delaying the implementation of the Oslo and Cairo agreements. By so doing, said the writer, Israel is not only making a mockery of all agreements with the Arabs but it is also showing its resolve never to pull out its forces from the lands that have been under occupation since 1967. Nothing, said the writer, can be expected from the United Nations or the co-sponsors of the Middle East peace process and therefore it is up to the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), which concluded the Oslo deal, to find a way to force Israel to honour its commitments.

SHARIF ZEID's visits Tuesday to the Lower and Upper Houses of Parliament and his talks with their speakers reflect the government's determination to work hand in hand with the legislative authority in order to ensure a smooth march of democracy and remove all obstacles in the path of future cooperation, said Al Ra'i in an editorial Wednesday. The paper said the government, like all others before it, can never succeed in implementing reform programmes or deal with chronic and pressing issues at hand without close cooperation with Parliament. It is to be noted that the presence of a large number of deputies in the present government, representing different blocs and political orientations, is something in favour of the government and gives it an advantage needed for the endorsement of draft laws, added the daily. It said that the success of the present government in handling such issues like unemployment or poverty depends to a large extent on the close cooperation it will get from Parliament.

View from Academia

Our society vis-a-vis our interculturalists

By Dr. Ahmad Y. Majdoubeh

LAST WEEK, I wrote in this column about the need for cultural orientation to our students who plan lengthy stays abroad, prior to their departure, with the aim of making their "intercultural" experience both more enjoyable and worthwhile. As large numbers of our students head west and east annually, the task and the effort of preparing them well for what is to come are certainly worth it.

But we have another obligation to these students, one which is equally significant — namely, to help them readjust upon their return. By "readjustment," I mean two things at once: a conscious attempt to help the returnees adapt smoothly within their own culture, from which they unavoidably have been somewhat estranged, and a sincere desire on our part to make effective use of the valuable perspective they bring back with them in our everlasting pursuit of social amelioration and development.

Some may find it strange to talk about readjustment (in the two senses of the word) for people who have been away from their mother culture for a relatively short period of time, 4-6 years for the majority. But it is not.

First of all, the gap between our present-day Arab culture and the contemporary cultures in which many of our students reside for a while is quite big indeed. Most of the cultures our students get exposed to are, despite the many striking similarities and affinities, diametrically opposed to ours. The ideals they cherish, the models of behaviour and practices they encourage, the moral values and ethics they promote are remarkably different from ours. And so are the norms, habits, customs, regulations, rules, laws and other means and ways of living.

Secondly, the 4-6 years are long enough and important enough (despite their seeming statistical insignificance) to make our students' encounter (brief but intense and intimate) with foreign cultures quite consequential. They are long enough to make seasoned lovers develop a "burning" taste for Chinese food and insist on it when they dine out on special occasions (for example), even though many of them do not relish it in the least when they first have it. They are long enough to make soccer fans love American football and baseball (two games they at first take to be inscrutable and silly), to make people use "I" and "my" (even though they have previously been brought up to use "we" and "ours"), to make them speak of "private space" in mother cultures where there is no notion of it, to make them speak of "career" in societies where jobs are taken less seriously than casual volleyball, to make them speak of "equal opportunity" and "fairness" in countries where "wasita" and personal connections have the ultimate say, etc.

Thirdly, whether we like it or not, we the Arab World of today live at a moment in history in which most of the countries our students seek for education purposes are noticeably more powerful than ours: they are the "first" world, we are the "third"; they are the "advanced" we are the "underdeveloped" or the "developing" (when they speak encouragingly to us or when we speak encouragingly

of ourselves); they are the rich, lucky "north," we are the unfortunate "poor" south (even though we possess oceans of oil and mountains of gold). Admittedly, the terminology may not be particularly flattering or palatable. The characterisation, however, is to an extent correct — sadly. Measured according to Ibn Khaldun's cyclical scheme of history, we lie closer to the bottom than the centre (and "fast falling," some would add). Forget the good old, glorious days of the forefathers, which are more remote and distant than the north pole. The point here is that, because of the situation just described, the influence of foreign cultures on our students is inevitably quite powerful. Keep in mind the fact that most of them go and come back, believing in their heart of hearts (much to their dismay) that their contemporary societies are in many aspects "inferior" to other societies.

Talk to people who have recently come from abroad, or to those who have not yet recovered from the home "culture shock" or may never recover, even though they have been back for quite some time now. You will be amazed at how "disappointed" they are, how "frustrated," how "shocked." There is a "home" culture shock.

A former student of mine, who has spent his entire life in this part of the world and is back from a one-year training course in one of the more "advanced" countries on today's earth, said to me the other day, "I was more shocked culturally when I came back than when I arrived abroad. Everything is wrong here, the way people speak, the way they walk in the street, the way they drive, the way they conduct business, the way they think about their jobs, the way they buy, the way they sell, the way they have weddings, the way they go on picnics, the way they socialise..." A friend of mine tells me he still flirts with the idea of writing a book he has hoped to write for years entitled "Three Months in Hell" describing the ugly encounter with bureaucracy and bureaucrats at the institution he now works at. Three months of filling out applications, refilling applications which were lost or misplaced, arguing with mindless employees about mindless regulations and laws, obtaining stupid signatures on trivial documents, carrying documents from one desk to the other or from one office to an office next door because the messenger was on leave or because the employee was too lazy and careless to carry them himself, laughing at stupid jokes he did not think particularly funny, finding connections to pressure connections to pull a few strings for him here and there, and so on.

There is some exaggeration here. Surely the situation is not that bad, nor is it that different from the countries our returnees have come back from. One of the worst experiences with bureaucracy I have ever had was with a motor vehicle department in a very advanced country; one of the most vexing, most painful flight delays I have ever had was also at an airport in a most civilised and developed European country. Yes, many of our people returning from abroad tend to romanticise the countries they have been to and tend to exaggerate the "badness" of what they

experience at home. Those coming from America tend to look at things through Americanised eyes, those from Germany through Germanised eyes, and those from Romania through Romanised eyes. Admittedly, therefore, their eyesight needs to be somewhat readjusted. Generally, these people find themselves, upon their return, caught up (quite nastily and uncomfortably) between two cultures.

At the same time, however, they have a valid point they wish to make — behind the exaggeration and amidst the romanticising and distortion. Their stay abroad and the experience they have had enable them to see what many of us do not see, do not want to see, or see but have taken for granted and have given up on. The fresh perspective our returnees bring with them is valuable and ought to be listened to, thought about, debated in public and encouraged. No one can convince me that the way they drive in Los Angeles or New York is half as bad as the way we drive in Cairo, Damascus or Amman. This is a fact. No one can convince me that Wasita is half as bad in the U.S. and even Italy or Greece as it is in Arab societies. This is another fact.

What do we do? Under the circumstances, I believe that our returnees have to meet society half-way, and our society has to meet our returnees half-way. It is a mistake of our people who come from abroad to want or expect change to happen overnight or to be extreme in their approach. And it is a mistake for our society, represented by our various formal institutions, to neglect, discount, disregard, suppress or oppress constructive criticism. There has to be a middle-ground. On the one hand, we do not want to become a USA, a Britain, or a Japan (or a strange mix of all). On the other hand, we do not accept for the present-day Arab World to be the largely flavourless, spineless, characterless, and impotent world it seems to be. We want our returnees, each in his/her own way, to help our society find itself, and we want our society to help the returnees to help it.

This is largely the job of our institutions. They are entrusted with the holy mission of overseeing the development of our society; they are the captains of the ship and the masters of our fate. It is their duty (and this is the point I wish to insist upon here) to take our returnees by the hand, listen to them honestly, scrutinise what they say, giving it a chance and a try if it sounds reasonable. And we want the institutions to defend their point when they disagree, to argue, to justify, to persuade and convince. Unfortunately, many of our institutions do not do this at present — or do not do enough. Generally, they lend not a sympathetic but a deaf ear to those who try to suggest new ways and approaches. This is a mistake. Change is uncomfortable, but it is a must.

We need to help those of us who come from abroad to readjust, connect and contribute, not to ignore their perspective or undermine it. Their intercultural experience is an asset.

Israeli land seizures threaten peace deal

Jewish settlement is undermining Palestinian self-rule, writes Sarah Helm from Jerusalem

BULLDOZERS WERE at work again recently near the West Bank settlement of Efrat, preparing the ground for new Jewish homes on land that nearby Palestinians claim is theirs.

A high profile protest obliged the Israeli government to halt the bulldozers from ploughing up a nearby hill. But the work has been moved to another piece of land, which is equally contested by local Palestinians.

Recent protests over Israeli settlement and land seizures have exposed the vast disparity between the perception in the world at large that peace has been made with the Palestinians and the reality of continued conflict on the ground.

The row has also revealed more powerfully than ever the weakness of the Oslo deal, signed by Yasser Arafat chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO). Since the Oslo signing land seizures have continued and Israel has now declared 70 per cent of the West Bank as "state land," while the number of settlers rose last year by 10 per cent. More than 140,000 Jews now live among the 1.3 million Palestinians of the West Bank.

Settlement, and the land seizure which precedes it, poses by far the biggest threat to peace. Arab land in the way of Israeli plans is bulldozed. Palestinian demonstrators are herded back by Israeli soldiers. Arab villages are throttled by zoning laws. And Palestinian documents — Ottoman, British, Jordanian and even Israeli — showing ownership of land, are deemed null and void by Jewish military orders.

The process now going on in the West Bank is perpetuating Jewish-Arab hatred. The Israeli government talks increasingly of the need for "separation" between Jews and Arabs. But leading Israeli human rights lawyers say a system of apartheid is being constructed. "As far as the different treatment given to the two different populations is concerned it is apartheid," says David Kretzner, professor of law at Hebrew University. "The two populations live in the same areas, but have different rights and are treated totally differently by the authorities."

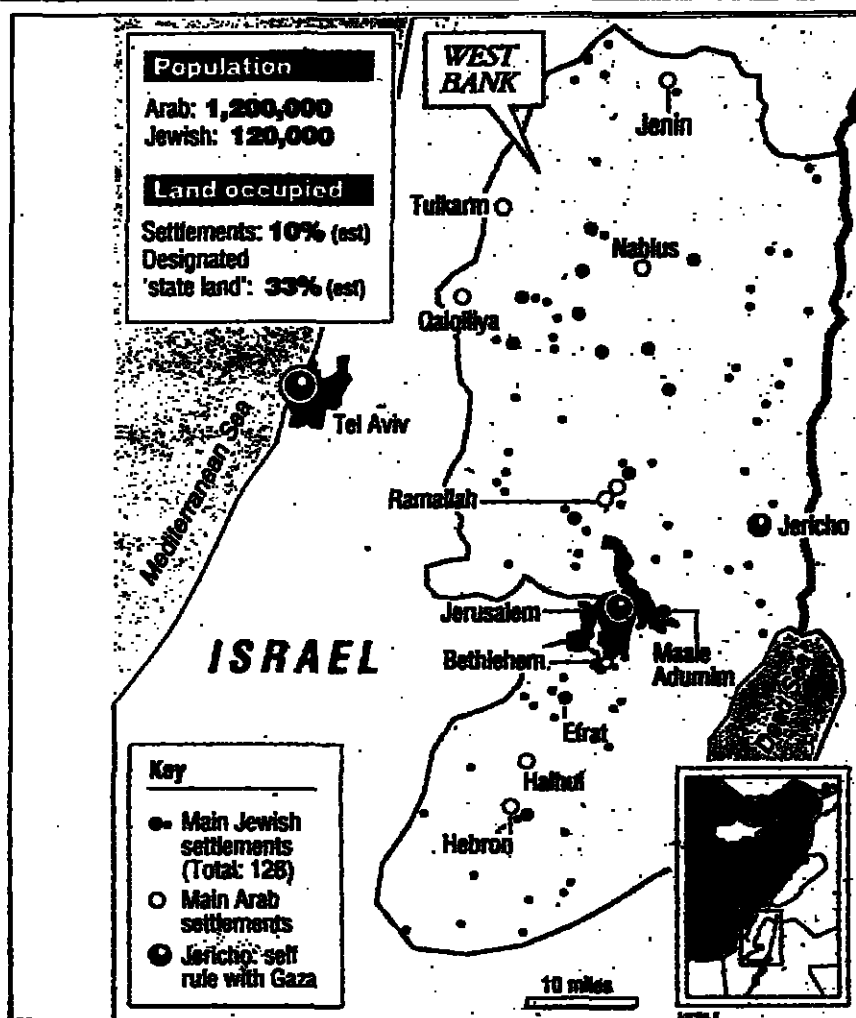
The Rabin administration has not reversed

Israel's underlying ideological and political claims to the West Bank, but has simply rationalised settlement strategy. Mr. Rabin is happy to lose troubled Gaza, which Israel seized from Egypt. The prime minister has also made clear that he has no desire to rule over a "hostile" Arab population in the West Bank, which was seized from Jordan. The government has therefore opposed settlement in the centre of areas of high Arab population, and proposed a degree of Palestinian self-rule.

However, this government remains determined to claim for Israel large chunks of West Bank territory and it is using the same twin-pronged approach as previous Israeli governments to achieve it, by promoting settlement to establish a Jewish majority on targeted lands, which can then be prepared for annexation. At the same time Arab growth throughout the occupied territories is squeezed by zoning laws.

The procedures used were put in place soon after Israel seized the lands in 1967. During the first four years of occupation 200 military orders were passed extending Israel's military jurisdiction over the lands, and empowering Israel to acquire property and control all resources, giving most Palestinians the status of alien residents with no rights. Land use planning was placed in the hands of military officers. Israel was swift to claim lands used by the Jordanian government as "Israeli state lands."

But it also unilaterally confiscated other areas for military and public use. To do this Israel took advantage of the confused state of land registration in the West Bank and the informal traditions of land ownership used by Palestinian residents, and made it impossible for most of them to argue before Israeli military courts, where the burden of proof was on them. Some land was even Arab village land marked out not on paper, but in the minds of every village mukhtar (elder) for generations, and shared by villagers. Such



lands were easily seized by Israel. Privately owned land has also been taken without difficulty where proof of formal registration does not meet military standards. When Israel captured the West Bank, Jordan was in the process of registering the private land but had completed only one third.

Unregistered owners have tax receipts and other title deeds, but these are not accepted by Israel. Having taken the land, Israel builds on it for the sole use of Jews, applying Israeli law. Neighbouring Arabs are ruled by military order, and heavily restricted from building.

According to international law the process is illegal. As an "occupier" Israel should act as a "caretaker" over the lands and not alter their status. In particular Article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention states:

"The occupying power shall not deport or transfer parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies."

As settlement continues, the Arab areas of the West Bank are being carved up to produce a series of separate cantons which cannot conceivably constitute a viable state. East Jerusalem, unilaterally annexed by Israel in 1967, is also being rapidly developed to prevent the Palestinians ever claiming this area of the city as their capital. Israeli planners intend to increase the number of Jews living in Jerusalem by 70,000 over the next two years, creating an 80 per cent Jewish majority, in the biggest building drive since the creation of the state of Israel.

Palestinians have said repeatedly that this continued assault on the West Bank and East Jerusalem is contrary to the spirit of the Oslo agreement.

"The Israelis have been pursuing the same strategies since Zionism began in the 19th century," says Dr. Halder Abdul Shafi, former chief Palestinian negotiator and a critic of Oslo.

But, as despairing Palestinian lawyers point out, by signing the Oslo deal Mr. Arafat effectively allowed Israel new grounds to justify its settlement, and to buy time for more building. Under the agreement Israel first recognised the PLO then signed a deal with the Palestinians under which peace would be achieved in two phases. There would be a trial phase of "interim autonomy," starting in Gaza and Jericho and extending to other areas of the West Bank, before negotiations on the final status of the occupied lands. The final status talks should start not later than May 1996.

Vaguely worded paragraphs in the agreement talk of preserving the integrity of the lands in the meantime. But during the interim phase, the PLO agreed there could be no discussion of sovereignty, Jerusalem, or refugees. This meant the PLO effectively abandoned its right to challenge Israel's military and legal apparatus in the occupied territories.

"By agreeing not to challenge the occupation law during the interim phase, the PLO has allowed Israel to make more facts on the ground and consolidate its position, dictating the shape of the final status," says Raja Shehadeh, the leading Palestinian authority on occupation law.

To defend its continued settlement activity the government today continues to deploy historical, biblical and legal arguments. These add up to one thing: Israel believes its claim to sovereignty in the West Bank overrides any Palestinian sovereignty claim as well as any claims by local Palestinians.

"I am not aware of any change in Israel's claim to sovereignty over the land since the Oslo accords," Yoel Zinger, senior legal adviser in the Israeli Foreign Ministry, said this week.

"There is a biblical right and a historical right. Jews came back to Palestine not to New York or Moscow — because they were coming back to their homeland. The same claim they had to Tel Aviv was equally relevant to Hebron or Nabulus," he said, referring to two West Bank towns. These rights were reinforced by subsequent international rulings, he said. Furthermore, said Mr. Zinger, Israel was not an "occupier" under the terms of the Geneva convention, because there was no previous legitimate sovereignty claim. Such arguments are rejected out of hand by human rights lawyers on both sides who point out that legal strategy is used to underpin political strategy.

"Israel is quite clearly an occupier under international law," says David Kretzner. "Sovereignty lies in the hands of the people who were living there when it was occupied. The occupier is obliged to act as a trustee of the land and has no right to alter its status by colonising and dispossession."

The Independent

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Weekender

1,000-mile walk starts with the first step

By Mohammad Masharifa

Not many Jordanian intellectuals are inclined towards accepting the idea of "normalisation with or openness to" the Israeli culture or Israel's society. They are not willing to enter into the subject searching for the good or the bad that separates the two sides.

In the view of Palestinian poet Ghassan Zaqtan, the concept of normalisation is a complete mystery shrouded with ideas like cultural influences, confrontation and cultural "onslaughts" or the like.

The mystery shrouding the concept of normalisation in its cultural or political sense and Arab intellectuals' keenness on shunning Israeli culture are perhaps justified by some people. But one has to admit that this tendency ought to be changed by first ruling out "the hostility elements" not merely for the sake of studying the situation, but indeed to meet the requirements of the coming changes of the modern era.

It is unreasonable for the Arabs to remain revolving in a vicious circle for another 100 years in order to discover that democracy, aid technology or respect for human rights, or separating religion from government constitute the real key to development and real civilisation.

For its part Israel has tried to exploit all techniques and tools against Palestinians, exercising the worst possible injustice ever witnessed in modern history and failed to achieve its objectives. For their part, the Israelis call for ignoring the present trend towards normalisation with Israel and prefer leaving the matter for the coming generations who, they believe, can end injustice. But they indeed tend to forget that neither Israel nor the world at large will remain

passive and frozen until the time when the Arabs and Muslims have completed their preparations for the final battle.

In my contacts with Palestinian academics I sensed silent voices advocating new methods for a solution to the present conflict which, in the views of some people, can last for generations to come. These academic elite openly call for openness to the forces of peace that are genuinely inherent within the Israeli society and for a long struggle towards the attainment of the aspired coexistence in this part of the world.

But unfortunately the deep wounds left behind in the Palestinian society, due to years of occupation, have caused so much damage that now stands as a barrier drowning the voices of the elite academics who advocate peaceful coexistence and healing of wounds.

AMMAN CULTURAL PULSE

Dr. Mustafa Hamarneh, head of the Centre for Strategic Studies at the University of Jordan asks: "What have the opponents of normalisation done in the face of the cultural, political and social changes in Israel with a view to favourably influencing the Israeli society towards peaceful coexistence with the Arabs?"

Hamarneh believes that the progressively-minded Palestinians and Israelis who oppose Jewish settlement policies and occupation have offered a far better service to the Palestinian cause than all the Arab countries' weapons and media and statements through their heroic and daring stand in the face of Jewish settlement programmes at Al Khader village near Bethlehem.

Now that the Jordan-Israel peace treaty has been

signed the need arises for creating new tools for a new struggle, utilising the present realities to halt the Jewish settlement programme and for formulating new tendencies and creating new forces inside Israel to help put pressure on the Israeli government to go ahead with the implementation of the peace process, Hamarneh adds.

His views are echoed by Dr. Ibrahim Othman, professor of sociology at the University of Jordan who believes that openness towards the Israeli society was bound to open the Arab people's eyes to their own civic rights and to the need to see institutions playing the crucial role in social development and in enhancing political pluralism. Dr. Othman believes that these signs are bound to emerge in our society sooner or later, motivating the desired change.

It is of paramount importance for us to dissect and scrutinise the various elements and components of the Israeli society so that we can better understand its nature. Otherwise, we are bound to remain satisfied with mere mysterious talk about the society of an "enemy" which we are religiously prohibited to approach.

We have to realise that Israel is made up of diverse elements, uncontrolled by absolute ideologies or by any form of unity. The Israeli society is full of diverse interests on the part of individuals who harbour different ambitions and who independently and freely express their cultural and political views.

But inside Israel one feels that the society there—similar to those of the Arab World—aspire to and has a deep desire for stability, security and sustainable development. Like the Arabs, the Israelis are influenced by positive and adverse regional and international environments.

It is not at all naive to admit that Jordanians, Palestinians and the Arabs at large have a real interest in opening to the Israeli society and all its elements and components, notwithstanding groups of that society who are opposed to peace and coexistence.

With very limited exceptions, the majority of the Israeli society believes that the Arabs are murderers, dishonest and have no respect for agreements, and that should they be offered one area of land, the next day they would demand to have control over Herzliya, or Acre, according to the views of an Israeli cab driver.

Likewise, the Arabs harbour similar notions about the Israelis and the misconceptions cannot be changed overnight. What is of paramount importance now is to start the 1000-mile trip by taking the first sound and firm step forward.

The alternative is a cycle of madness on the part of both parties, ending with the obliteration of the nucleus of the Arab civic society and the individuals' basic rights. This will be the heavy price which could be paid in case the opponents of peace had their way of pursuing the long and futile struggle to destroy the "Jews" who have occupied Arab land.

I am fully aware that sensible Jordanian and Palestinian people who support my views are a minority compared to the majority of those who bear negative concepts and who refuse to budge from their own position.

I also realise that this small minority of sensible people require courage and initiative and probably great sacrifice to leave their mark on history.

Irrationality still seems to be prevailing and permeating the Jordanian society, closing all outlets to the outside world.

SOCIETY ON THE MOVE

Change on tail of change: what cabinets leave in their trail

With the changing of the guard at the Prime Ministry, it has been uncanny that the outgoing premier be present at the swearing in ceremony of his successor's team or at any official function once the reigns of power have been exchanged. But for former Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali, an act of high civility was noted. Not only was Dr. Majali present at the oath-taking ceremony of the new prime minister and his colleagues before His Majesty King Hussein, it was his name that was mentioned first on the broadcast news of who attended. Even the day after the new cabinet took office, Dr. Majali was again present to see off Greek Prime Minister Andreas Papandreu and his delegation, whom he had received only a few days earlier upon their arrival on an official visit. Dr. Majali who plans to take a holiday in London, capped an historic tenure with a regal exit.

FRIENDS AT THE TOP: But, to assure citizens that not all is pomp and circumstance, Dr. Majali introduced Sharif Zeid to guests at a formal dinner for Mr. Papandreu as "this is the man who kicked me out of my job." To that, the prime minister retorted, in jest of course, "you kicked me out of my job before, and now I'm getting my revenge." Whoever said our government was humourless?

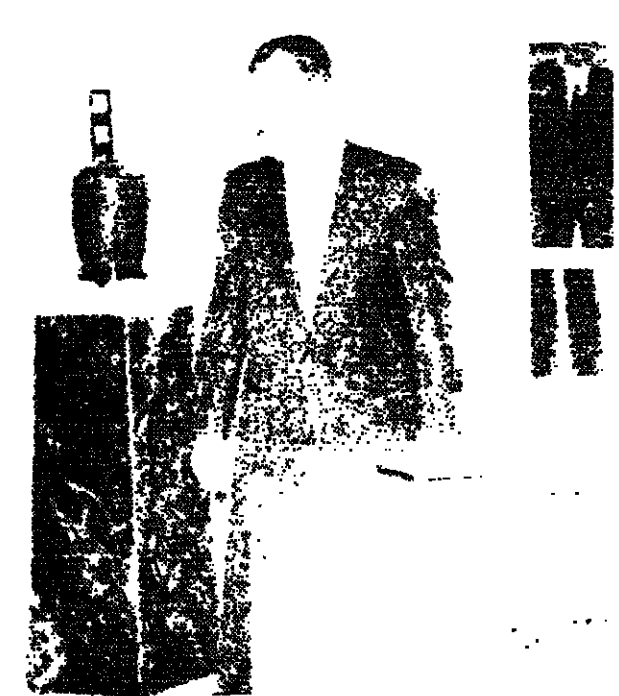
STORM IN CABINET ROOM: It required a sense of humour from Sharif Zeid again on the first day the cabinet took office, when a crowd of about 70 over-eager well-wishers stormed into a Cabinet meeting to congratulate the prime minister. Stunned, but quick to the draw, the premier gently held back the biostorous bunch by promising to meet them outside the chamber in short order. And that, he did with more ease than one of his ministers could muster only minutes later. The minister was holding an official meeting with an Arab delegation at the Prime Ministry when a certain member of Parliament barged in, demanding that members of the cabinet be available "for receiving congratulations" from him and other MPs right away. Upset by the discourteous attitude of his fellow deputy the minister got up and gave him a dressing down. It is all part of the change, of course, including in friendships and attitudes.

COMRADE IN HIGH PLACES: The big surprise to most political pundits in town was not the appointment of a totally new face to government, namely that of prominent businessman Samih Darwazah (Energy), but that of Abdul Ilah Al Khatib who took the Tourism Ministry. Known to some as the "rising young politician," Khatib took a post in the cabinet as his father-in-law, Fawwaz Abu Ghannam, stepped down as minister of youth. Khatib's wife Iman, no stranger to the diplomatic rigours of having family in high places, knew even before she married, that this was a fellow who would go places. Unfortunately the Jordan Times did not do its home work properly by looking for Khatib's CV well before his impending appointment to the cabinet. So the paper could assemble no more than a few lines on his biography just as he was being sworn in, especially since his home phone sounded like it was off the book for most of that day. Hence we owe it to our friend the new minister to say exactly what he had been doing in life just before he was chosen for the new post. Born in Salt in 1953, Khatib obtained a bachelors degree in political science in Athens, Greece. He earned a masters in mass communications from American University in Washington, D.C. and another masters in international economics and development from Johns Hopkins University, also in Washington. Khatib served with the Foreign Ministry for several years and was posted at Jordan's embassy in Washington, D.C. in the early 1980s. He was secretary of the steering committee of the Jordanian



delegation to the Arab-Israeli peace talks until he resigned from government service in May 1993 to enter the private sector. He was assistant director-general for investments of the Middle East Insurance Company, then moved to the Investment Guarantee Company where he was its director general until his appointment to the cabinet this week.

BIRDS OF A FEATHER: The ministers of foreign affairs, tourism and planning appeared to be busy forming a coalition at the top of the stairs outside Basman Palace after being sworn in to office last Sunday. Deep in conversation, the (relatively) young, Western-educated and hardworking Abdul Karim Kabariti, Rima Khalaf and Abdul Ilah Al Khatib must have missed the Petra photographer say "watch the birdie" when he shot the group photo of the new cabinet with His Majesty King Hussein and Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker. But the hierarchy of seating the Council of Ministers at its sessions with the premier will force the energetic trio apart, if only for those more composed settings.



Abdul Ilah Al Khatib

SPOUSES BEHIND THE CURTAIN: Having another woman in the cabinet may very likely result in additional alliances between more reform-minded ministers, and that Salwa Damen-Masri was given the social development portfolio is indicative of a resolve to improve the lot of women and the poor in the country. Meanwhile, the social development minister's husband, Munther Al Masri, might do well to consult Hani Huneidi on what life is like as "joz il wazirah." In the earlier months of then Minister of Industry and Trade Rima Khalaf's tenure, Huneidi, her husband, had difficulty responding to "Mr. Khalaf." He admits, however, that he quickly learned to take such incidences in good stride. In the case of Masri, who is secretary general of the Ministry of Education, his newly-appointed ministerial spouse goes by the hyphenated style of using both her family and married names. Confusion here, then, should be minimum.

BAN ON TOLL-FREE CALLS: It is truly a Jordanian phenomenon. When the word is out that a new government is in the making, cabinet hopefuls hold vigil by their telephones in anticipation of "the" call which might propel them to a seat on the ever-expanding executive branch. Pity the teenager whose parent sits home not a metre from the nearest phone with orders punishable by the severest grounding if that phone is engaged. While our hopefuls waited last week, someone spent a good portion of his/her free toll units on the previous Wednesday and called the offices of nearly 30 members of the Lower House of Parliament with a message that the deputy in question should report to the Prime Ministry at 6:30 that evening. On the designated evening 16 parliamentarians dutifully reported to the Fourth Circle office of the premier, only to discover no such summoning originated from that office, and worse, all Prime Ministry employees had called it a day. Parliament was busy trying to track down the prankster.

NO FAVOURS FROM DEPARTING MINISTERS: Others wait also. One outgoing minister complained—not without a smile—that as he arrived at his ministry on the morning Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali offered his resignation to His Majesty the King, he was taken aback by a sight he had never before seen on his way to his

office. Ministry employees were lined up, gathered, crowded or hovering everywhere from the parking area, through the main entrance of the building and even along the halls of the minister's floor. It became immediately apparent that this amassing of staff was no show of solidarity or salute to their boss. It was an avalanche of last-ditch efforts to request "wasta" for making new government appointments either for themselves, relatives or friends while the man was still in power. Unfortunately for them, this minister told those would-be favour seekers that inequity was not his style. Dr. Majali did in fact ask his outgoing ministers not to give out any job while the cabinet was a lame duck, and they happily complied.

FROM STILL OFFICE TO AIR WAVES: As if by design and not coincidence, Mohammad Said Barmant, former director of the press office at the Prime Ministry, started a new job last week as Director of television news at JTV, succeeding Abdul Halim Arabiyat who became deputy to JTV Director Nasser Judeh. Did Barmant know that the whole cabinet was leaving office, or he just chose to opt out of the Prime Ministry, where he had served for many years, regardless of who was left behind? We do not know. But we do know that Barmant graduated from the University of Jordan with a B.A. in political science in 1976. He has been a public servant for 17 years, mostly at the Prime Ministry, where he was press secretary and then press office director for the last three years. Barmant says of his new post that "it is not a one-person effort, it requires the help of colleagues." His goal is to "make clear the stand of Jordan in all aspects, politically, socially, economically, in order to portray a good image of the Kingdom through JTV, especially in this era." Barmant says he is first feeling his way through the situation at the station, getting to know his colleagues and then will form some targets with the JTV team to bring viewers "balanced" news reporting. Barmant (40) and his wife Basma, an architectural engineer, have two children aged 11 and four.

Jennifer Hamarneh

Thoughts for this week

"Age is strictly a case of mind over matter. If you don't mind, it doesn't matter — Jack Benny (1894-1974).

Our greatest glory is not in never failing, but in rising every time we fail — Confucius, Chinese philosopher (551 B.C.-479 B.C.).

We are what we pretend to be so we must be careful what we pretend to be — Kurt Vonnegut, American author (1922 —).

Health is the thing that makes you feel that now is the best time of the year — Franklin P. Adams, American journalist (1881-1960).

We live by encouragement and die without it — slowly, sadly and angrily — Celeste Holm, American actress.

Priests are no more necessary to religion than politicians to patriotism — John Hayne Holmes, American author and reformer (1879-1964).

Open-mindedness is not the same as empty-mindedness. To hang out a sign saying, "come right in; there is no one at home" is not the equivalent of hospitality — John Dewey, American philosopher and educator (1859-1952).

A matter of time

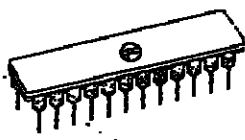
By Jean-Claude Elias

We are living in the age of information. That's at least what we are told. The amount of data a mere mortal can access these days, quickly, simply and inexpensively is absolutely flabbergasting. Entire encyclopaedias fit on small, light, reliable laser CD-ROMs (Compact Disc - Read Only Memory). The average capacity of a home computer's hard disk is now 250 MB, or 250 million characters. The straight connection of a PC (personal computer) to the telephone network, through ridiculously simple cables, opens the door to virtually all the information in the world, via the famous Internet or other electronic mail, services, networks and data banks. Is this knowledge? Is this true culture, as those who mass market computer related products want us to believe?

I have no intention here to diving into a philosophical essay, but my perception of knowledge and/or culture, is based on two criteria: autonomy and assimilation. Autonomy means that a physical person, a stand-alone (computer jargon again) body, is able to supply, to restore the required information, by himself/herself, without having to consult additional equipment, books or data storage devices. Anybody can open a dictionary to look up a difficult or rarely used word, knowledge however is knowing it by heart. Assimilation means that the word is fully understood, its meaning completely absorbed, and that the person can use it at best, and in all contexts.

Knowledge and culture can't be achieved without an essential ingredient: time. Like the rhythm of seasons, it's a process impossible to speed. We all have days that last only 24 hours. Whether we are or are not connected to the Internet won't change a thing. An encyclopaedia takes the same time to read, whether on CD-ROM or in book format. True, the

chip talk



laser disc is faster and maybe more pleasant to consult than the traditional format, but the time we may save on fast search is insignificant compared to the time it takes to read, understand and assimilate the information.

The addition of high quality moving images and sound to computer accessed data, known as multimedia, and the possibility to interact with data via a PC, all are invaluable benefits that must be acknowledged. Computer techniques tremendously expand the horizons of our knowledge but do not grant us one second more than what we already have in order to explore them. Actually, a negative effect often takes place. Having all this data potentially at our command with so little time to dig it out, scrutinise it, can be more frustrating than rewarding.

Modern age information systems do not provide any particular means to improve one's knowledge or culture. Books have so far done an excellent job in this regard. Naturally, the availability of huge amounts of data at our fingertips is a great asset. It's a wealth we cannot anymore do without. It will also, most likely, hopefully, contribute to secure us better ways of life, but it won't necessarily make us more cultured. Not instantly at least. Unless future generations redefine and give new meaning to the notions of knowledge and culture.

Slick and witty, but do they work?

By Samer Ghaleb Bagseen

In today's world of advertising, where the buzz word is accountability, advertisers should be asking themselves whether their money is well spent. And they should be seeking proof of that all the time. For today, there is a huge emphasis on generating immediate sales, tomorrow.

In the more developed economies, this has affected the role played by the traditional media such as television, the press and posters: their market share is falling. Increasingly, companies have been turning to direct mail and sales promotion. Such activities are far easier to measure.

Gauging the effectiveness of an advertising campaign remains a notoriously imprecise science. It takes more than simply adding up the number of packs sold. The impact of the advertisement must be assessed in total isolation from other factors such as product innovation. Still, a lot depends on what the advertising is trying to achieve. While some campaigns are designed to get people to buy a product, others are created to maintain rather than develop a brand's market position. Sales increases are then not necessarily a relevant measure. Smart marketing is

about orchestrating all elements in one direction. Under challenging economic conditions however, there becomes a need to justify the value of advertising. Judging purely on creative merit misrepresents a business which is after all, a commercial tool and not a part of the arts. Even if innovation and creativity remain important.

Smart advertisers realise that the real value of creating advertising lies not in its cost but in its added value — the ability to generate greater effect for less money, to be talked about.

So what makes an effective ad? Better targeting and a closer understanding of the consumer is one element. Also, there are now more clever ways to hit the right people at the right time and in the right mood. A campaign that "works" is generally accepted to be one that encourages people to identify with, relate to and connect with the ad. To maintain this connection, it is therefore important for advertising to keep up with an audience's changing hopes and aspirations.

But this also means that what makes an effective ad is always in a state of flux. No sooner will an agency hit on the right approach for a particular audience than a rival will do something different and rewrite the rules.

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

By Mohammad A. Shugair

LET'S CHAT IN ARABIC

- Make your mind easy. *Hawwen aleik.*
- Be a man! Take heart! *Kon rajolan! Tashajja!*
- Save the mark! *La samahallah.*
- Let it pass. *Da' al-amr yamur bessiam.*
- God keep you. *Hafizakal'lah.*
- You make me jump. *Innaka tod'hishoni.*
- Keep your hair on. *La tugh'dab.*
- By the grace of God. *Befadil'lah.*
- For goodness sake. *Bellahi aleik.*
- Don't fail me. *La takhzolul.*
- Stop cracking jokes. *Kafaka tankootan.*
- Mark my words. *Tazakkur ma sqool.*
- Cut it short. *Ikhtashir/Awjez.*
- Please do accept my invitation. *Arjao an taqbal da'wati.*

TIME FOR FUN

★ A friend of mine went to see his neighbour. The host treated him with honey, but it was so tasteless and diluted that the guest could not help commenting:

"Clearly this honey is from the days when the bees hadn't yet learnt how to make honey!"

★★★★★

★ A young man took his wife to the doctor to have her tonsils removed.

"These tonsils should have been removed while your wife was a child," the doctor said after the operation.

"Indeed?" he answered. "Thank you very much for telling me. In that case just send the bill to my father-in-law."

★★★★★

BANK OF KNOWLEDGE

1. What is haemophilia? What famous people have suffered from it? What detective novel deals with it?

2. In what occupation are the following used? Play-fair, exposure meter, Bergen, grammalogue, cram-pit, gentle, cheese, bewits, burin, puck.

★★★★★

3. Name five (5) great disasters in the nineteenth century which were due to fire.

★★★★★

4. Write 3879 in Roman numerals. What is MMMDCCCXXIX in Arabic figures.

★★★★★

5. Complete:

- (a) You can't make a out of a
- (b) You can't put an on
- (c) You can 'take a to the, but you can't make it
- (d) You can't take an without
- (e) You can't get out of a

★★★★★

PERPLEXITIES

- (A) Rearrange and underline which of these towns is not in Europe.

SHANTE — WOOCISM — LINAM — GATH-WONNIS — GAIWN

★★★★★

- (B) Insert the missing number.

7	16	
5	21	16
9	?	4

★★★★★

A 3-day concert now down to 2 CDs

SAUGERTIES. N.Y. (AP) — Sick of Woodstock? Imagine how Larry Hamby must feel.

The shelves in his office at A And M Records are lined with tapes of every musical note played at Woodstock '94. He has listened to those tapes seven days a week — over and over — from the time the concert ended on the morning of Aug. 15, until early October.

Hamby was responsible for piecing together the commemorative compact disc of the summer concert. The two-disc set has just been released.

"I'm not sick of it," Hamby insisted in an interview, "although, I'm ready to take a breather from it."

Distilling three days of music into a 27-song package inevitably means a lot was left out, including a number of big-name artists. But Hamby's proud of what he's done

and thinks he has captured the event's essence.

No artist is represented with more than one song. But it also contains enough out-of-left-field selections that the album takes on its own personality.

While Woodstock '94 was a mixture of the old and new, Hamby's CD is weighed toward younger, hard-rocking artists.

"I didn't want this record to be presented from the veteran rock point of view," he said. "I thought they should be set among the new bands instead of the other way around."

As a result, the Allman Brothers Band, Santana and the band are out. Collective Soul, Candlebox, Primus and Blind Melon are in.

At Woodstock, Hamby commanded a team of more than three dozen people making sure all the music was captured on tapes. Two remote record-

ing trucks were parked behind each of the two main stages, and Hamby was camped in an office between them.

Tape was transported throughout the weekend to the Bearsview Studio about 10 miles (16 kms) away, where high-quality copies were made.

Then Hamby, an executive who helps guide the careers of A And M Artists, returned to Los Angeles and began reviewing the tapes. He was too exhausted to count how many hours he spent listening.

Handling all of the egos involved was surprisingly easy, he said.

Clear ground rules involving the musicians were set up: The artists had ultimate veto power over which of their songs were selected, but Hamby had the final say over what songs appeared on the album.

For the most part, he

said artists agreed with his choice, even if some persuading was needed. For example, Crosby, Stills and Nash wanted to include their performance of Woodstock, appropriately enough. Hamby thought DeJa Vu was a more impressive performance.

While some artists are represented by well-known songs, other choices were more obscure: Sheryl Crow's Run, Baby, Run, Traffics' Pearly Queen, Candlebox's Arrow and the Neville Brothers' cover of Come Together.

cover of Come Together. Hamby wouldn't say which performers were left off because their shows were superb. But he said most of those cases were weather-related. That may be a veiled reference to the band, caught in a driving rainstorm during their performance.

JTV CHANNEL 2 WEEKLY PREVIEW

Thursday, Jan. 12

7:30 N.B.A.

8:30 Road To Avonlea

Peg Bowen is highly instrumental in getting Felix King out of a school dilemma.

9:10 The Hat Squad

The brothers fight to protect their father when a vengeful explosives expert escapes from prison and seeks to even the score with him.

10:00 News In English

10:20 Feature Film — Drop Dead Fred

Starring: Rik Mayall & Marsha Mason

12:00 The Exile

Friday, Jan. 13

7:30 African Skies

8:00 Movies, Games And Videos

8:30 You Bet Your Life

9:00 P.M. Magazine

9:30 Heart Of Courage

An attempt to apprehend an armed man who has stormed the parliament and killed many people in Canada.

10:00 News In English

10:20 Blanche

True love finally comes to Blanche in the person of Clovis Lauze, a local railroad worker, who assists her later in her fight against corruption.

11:10 Never The Twain

Oliver rushes for a neighbouring house to put a fire which has just started.

Saturday, Jan. 14

7:30 Harry And The Hendersons

8:00 Innovation

The programme looks at the use and effect of anesthetics in surgical operations.

8:30 Quantum Leap

9:10 Murder She Wrote

An old man is found dead after his wife starts an affair with another man.

10:00 News In English

10:20 Feature Film — Country

Starring: Jessica Lange & Sam Shepard

The film tells the story of the Ivys, a farm family deeply rooted to the soil around them. When the government bureaucrats decide to take it all away, there is only one decision the family can make... they're staying.

12:00 Major Dad

The major causes himself a lot of trouble after having a number of civilians dismissed from his base.

Sunday, Jan. 15

7:30 Galactica

8:15 The Album Show

9:00 The Nanny

A feisty, opinionated New Yorker upsets the cool serene household of a successful Broadway producer when she becomes nanny to his three children.

9:30 Heartbeat

10:00 News In English

10:20 Feature Film — Turner And Hooch

Starring: Tom Hanks & Graig Nelson

The film is a hilarious comedy which tells the story of fussy, neat police detective, Scott Turner, and his huge, drooling dog, Hooch. Assigned to a brutal murder case, Turner has only one witness to help him solve it, Hooch.

12:00 The Hidden Room

A woman, who works as a model, becomes schizophrenic and loses social ties as she gets caught in a psychological dilemma.

Monday, Jan. 16

7:30 Black Beauty

8:00 Boogies Diner

Chaos prevails as a popular star visits the store.

8:30 Street Hawk

9:10 Shades Of L.A.

10:00 News In English

10:20 Louisiana

Virginia, who is a land-owner in Louisiana, gets into a lot of trouble as she comes to bad terms with her husband, Charles.

Tuesday, Jan. 17

7:30 Practical Guide To The Universe

8:00 The Detectives

The police leap in to stop an attempt to smuggle diamonds.

8:30 Quantum Leap

It is 1962 now. Sam appears in the person of a shelter-building engineer who is engaged in preparing against an imminent Cuban missile-attack.

8:10 Equinox

The programme looks at the latest research on memory which is getting closer towards understanding how we remember and recall what we have remembered.

10:00 News In English

10:20 Wild Palms

Harry travels to Japan to strike a deal when he discovers there that he has become a member of an under-cover organisation.

11:10 Flair

Wednesday, Jan. 18

7:30 Home Improvement

8:00 Quantum Leap

It is in Arizona, 1957. Sam assumes the character of the last still-living cowboy who seems to be standing ready for his final duel.

8:30 Lorenzo's Oil

The programme tells the amazing, true story of a fatally ill young boy, Lorenzo Odone, and his parents' incredible battle to save him.

9:10 Law And Order

This episode's court case is about a man who is found dead in the middle of the road and whose wife becomes a suspect.

10:00 News In English

10:20 Snowy River

Matt and Kathleen team up to help a girl find her father she has not seen for twenty years.

12:00 Keeping Up Appearances

Change in social attitude essential for better education

By Rima Corthawi
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Being the cornerstone in the foundations of development, education in Jordan has for the past few years acquired a substantial share of attention whether from the media, authorities or educators. However in anticipating major advances to come as a consequence of implementing educational reform, an insight into the complexities involved would be a helpful guideline for a realistic outlook.

"Education is indeed a very complex issue that is individual yet involves many factors," said Victor Billeh, president of the National Centre of Educational Research and Development. An attitude that denotes absolute readiness to learn must be encouraged among students. "Certainly efforts from both parents and educators are needed to guide students to the right approach," said Dr. Billeh. So establishing willingness in students to acquire information should be the focus of parents' and educators' concentration, especially if higher education is to be sought. It is well-known that the

greatest proportion of accelerated progress is guaranteed by the activities of individuals who have deservedly attained higher education, but unfortunately viewing the situation from institutions of higher education does not give a promising picture.

University professors sense a lack of drive in the majority of students. "On average, only 10-15 per cent of the students in a typical lecture hall at the university are self-motivated and show enthusiasm about the learning process. The rest give every indication of being forced into education by a variety of factors, not least among which being the pressures of a society that demands a degree certificate before individual worth or merits are recognised," said Riyadh Ahmad Bitar, professor of physics at the University of Jordan.

The fact that 50 years ago higher education was not compulsory for citizens to obtain decent jobs and undergo career advancement could be the reason for this decreased percentage of self-initiated students in comparison with the old days, according to Dr. Bitar. "About 50 years ago, high



"On average, only 10-15 per cent of the students in a typical lecture hall at the university are self-motivated and show enthusiasm about the learning process."

selectivity of students was exercised by universities which only admitted the keenest students into their higher educational programmes, and these students' thirst for knowledge was their mainstay at university," Dr. Bitar said.

So university graduates were truly well-informed in their majors having ac-

quired their degree primarily through hard work and a desire to learn not being compelled by any underlying motives. "However, these days we face the problem of having to educate the willing and the compelled because both have a right to education. That is why employment by classical methods that can only serve the self-

driven minority of students is not sufficient," said Dr. Bitar. Modern teaching techniques that eventually stimulate the most dormant learning tendencies must be sought in educating the least motivated majority of students — who ought to be the target of educators' concern. These modern methods go beyond "te-

dious lecturing" while students write or copy notes to involve the utilisation of visual aids, modern computer facilities, introduction to real life situations by carrying out appropriate project work, organising discussion groups, executing programmes that aim at applying theoretical knowledge into practical en-

counters and numerous other interactive techniques that stimulate students into thinking and correlating information, according to Dr. Bitar.

"There is definitely a shortage of educators and consequently students who genuinely understand technology. Whereas educators and students in developed countries can feel numbers and apply scientific theories into their every-day existence, the lack of ability to articulate academic concepts and substantiate them by numerical analysis is prevalent amongst developing nations," said Dr. Bitar. So, although education in Jordan is quite advanced in comparison with developing countries, efforts must be resumed to surpass the standards in the developed world.

"Naturally allocation of funds for education is needed to up-date educational facilities and educate educators to become capable tutors who understand technology. Also a change in society's attitude towards education is necessary," Dr. Bitar said. Apparently the individualistic approach of society only serves to hinder public development, according to Dr. Bitar. The approach is portrayed

by, among many other things, the wrongful idea that easy acquisition of high marks to show for great capability is more rewarding and valuable than attaining a high standard of quality education where real potentials can stand out and acquire sufficient well-deserved acknowledgement.

"To our great disadvantage, a successful, skilled and well-educated person often suffers the vices of antagonistic hostilities coming from envious work-mates instead of enjoying recognition and encouragement. This attitude of meeting success with hostility springs out of the fact that citizens are more involved with their own individual progress, or rather expansion of their individual resources, than the overall public development. Certainly this uncommendable attitude is contagious and is most often passed on to the new generations," said Dr. Bitar.

Thus, in achieving high standards of education, parents, society and educators, as well as students' attitude all combine to influence the progress of this complicated yet vital aspect of human development.

A man, a boy and the sharing of silence

By Ian Atalla

Special to the Jordan Times

Although the dead cannot speak, they must be able to communicate among themselves in a peculiar sort of internationally standardised sign language. How else does one explain the fact that just this month in Sarajevo, that famous 1990s hotspot of ethnic thugery and international embarrassment, a seven-year-old boy lay down to die — and as he did so, called out in silence to a man he never knew, a middle-aged stranger from a foreign land who met his own end almost a quarter century ago?

The first protagonist in this parapsychological melodrama was shown in the Dec. 24 edition of this newspaper. The extensive spill of vital fluids from the downward side of his head, cracked open by a well-aimed sniper's bullet, makes it clear that the youngster's final breaths have either already ceased or will do so within a few minutes. So quickly was the hunter able to take down his quarry that the boy never had the chance to physically react — it is as if he had suddenly fallen flat from tripping over his shoelaces.

Since the elapsing of that moment, the fidgety glances and twitches so typical of children his age have fled from his face, leaving behind in their place a peculiarly adult expression of serenity which mocks the two United Nations "blue helmets" who scramble frantically around him, like two panicked kitchen maids arrived too late to put out a cooking fire.

The second protagonist is Wael Zuaiter, a 38-year-old cultural/arts dilettante from Nablus. After spending approximately five years in Rome leading a sort of happy-go-lucky bohemian lifestyle, he turned to political activism — and paid for it with his life on the evening of Oct. 16, 1972.

A photo taken by Roman policemen who stumbled upon the scene of Mr. Zuaiter's demise on that long ago night, shows how he lay on his side in a foetal position — as if he were sleeping in bed, and not sprawled on the pavement of the courtyard of an apartment building. A bag containing a loaf of bread lay dropped on the ground behind him, but he still clung stubbornly with his left hand to a magazine and a bundle of X-ray plates from the clinic of a local doctor.

Friends of Mr. Zuaiter's, alive today, remember him as eloquent in his speech. But in death, it is the Sarajevo boy who is the more powerful witness, with the fawn-like softness of his features which so witheringly damns his anonymous killer.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★



Wael Zuaiter lies dead in Rome on Oct. 16, 1972

A group of Mr. Zuaiter's Italian friends — several writers, artists and journalists among them — felt indebted enough to him to publish a 200-page book in his memory in 1979. But it is doubtful that many Middle East observers of today distinctly recall his name.

In the time which has elapsed since his death, the dimensions of the conflict which dominated the later years of his life and then took it away have radically changed.

Years were to pass before Anwar Sadat would stun the world with a visit to Israel, and the first stone-throwing of the intifada were a full decade and a half away. Even the Yom Kippur war, by now little more than a chapter in history books, had not been fought yet.

Instead of stepping up onto podiums together for peace, Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat and the premiers and ministers of Israel were busily engaged with each other in a round-the-clock, tit-for-tat scare war of bombings, terror raids and assassinations. The latest high-profile episode had taken place only two months earlier at the Munich Summer Olympics. Seven Palestinian guerrillas had gone to their graves in a bloody gunbattle with German and Israeli security forces, taking 13 Israeli hostages with them.

Mr. Zuaiter had come to Italy in 1962, after several years of wandering and working on-and-off in Iraq, Kuwait and Germany.

Then, with the outbreak of the 1967 war and news that his hometown of Nablus had fallen to advancing Israeli troops, he had felt it his duty to join the Palestinian resistance. He went to the Algerian embassy in Rome to enlist as a volunteer fighter, and was rejected because he was too old. He was also released from a Palestinian training camp for would-be commandos after he "proved incapable of handling a gun," according to Italian author Alberto Moravia.

Eventually, he channelled his resistance efforts into a less aggressive and more cerebral mode, as a political/cultural representative for Al Fateh in Italy. This proved to be much more suitable to the nature of a man whose friends remember as being, among other things, a veritable bookworm. Those who write in the 1979 book dedicated to him, entitled simply "For A Palestinian," recount how he would voraciously gobble up tomes on everything from opera to astronomy to the history of religious mystic movements, and more. A favourite pet project of his, which he never completed, was to translate the oldest known Arabic version of A Thousand And One Nights, in its entirety, into Italian.

In the end, the man who emerged after the 1967 war, a tireless organiser of seminars, Arab-Italian committees, publishing projects and a "Palestinian



A seven-year-old boy lies dead from sniper fire in Sarajevo

Cultural Centre" in Rome, was a marked contrast to what acquaintances had known before, a man once happy to spend "entire days... chattering with Arab students in a coffee bar," according to one journalist who knew him.

"Always the worst manager of his own affairs, he would spend what little money he had on books, records and tickets to concerts or the opera," the journalist, Pietro Petrucci, writes in For A Palestinian. "A few hundred lire was all he needed to buy a sandwich, and he was not ashamed of wearing clothes discarded by his friends."

Although the testimony of one's devoted friends cannot be taken as unbiased evidence, Mr. Petrucci and others who write in For A Palestinian unanimously assert that by 1972, five years of Mr. Zuaiter's sustained efforts as a Palestinian activist had paid substantial dividends. Italy's intellectual circles, once staunchly pro-Israeli for the most part, had begun to stir about and question former views once held with certainty.

Partial success gave birth to bolder ambitions: Mr. Zuaiter now dreamed of having a group of Europe's most famous writers and artists jointly sign a declaration of support for the Palestinian cause. There were also hopes that some of Italy's cinematographers might consider making films on the Palestinian people and their predicament.

Then, in the summer of 1972, things unexpectedly took a nasty turn. Ghassan Kanafani, an eminent Palestinian poet, was assassinated in Beirut that July. Kanafani had been cultural director for the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. The Munich debacle followed in August, and with the media fallout that came on its heels, Europe went chill towards the Palestinians and their cause.

Mr. Zuaiter would not condone the PLO's role in the Munich slaughter, and insisted to friends that he personally considered any such acts to be "sheer madness." Nevertheless, a large number of his Italian contacts in intellectual and political circles, whom he had worked so hard to win over during the previous years, faded away.

He was also intelligent enough to fathom what Kanafani's death might imply for him, and he was scared: "If I remain, they will kill me," he told a friend anxiously.

A few weeks later, as he opened the door of an elevator lift to go up to his apartment, two assailants stepped out from hiding in a broom cabinet behind him and pumped three .22 calibre bullets into his back. In a thoroughly useless attempt to flee, Zuaiter ran out into an adjacent courtyard in the building complex and collapsed. There, he was finished off with another nine bullets.

The Fateh representative in Rome ended his career as he began it — penniless. The bag with the single breadloaf which he carried that night was meant to be his supper, and his telephone had been cut off because he couldn't come up with the money for the bill.

Previously, PLO officials had urged him to let them loan him a pistol, in case he should ever need it for self-defence. He had refused.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

In the following few months of 1972 and throughout the next year, or so it appears, Israeli authorities remained determined to exact a painful price for Munich. Five more PLO affiliates in Europe would meet their deaths during that period, either brought down in the same manner as Mr. Zuaiter or blown apart by remote-controlled bombs. The first to follow was Mahmoud Hamshari, Fateh's representative in France, who had himself attended Mr. Zuaiter's funeral wake in Rome only seven weeks earlier. The next four followed in gradual succession — Hussein Bashir, Basil Kubaisi, Mohammad Boudia and Amed Bouchicki.

Moments would remain behind for some of Mr. Zuaiter's associates in Italy. Mr. Petrucci remembered how a short vacation spent together in a seaside villa turned into a journey of memory, of childhood summers spent on the seacoast of another land, 30 years before.

"I still have in my ears," Mr. Zuaiter once told another friend, "the rhythm of the water pumps irrigating, day and night, the orange-groves of Jaffa." Journalist Ennio Polito remembers how once, in the tense atmosphere of a raucous public hall meeting, Mr. Zuaiter stood up from the back of the audience to give those assembled his version of the events which had brought about the very first war in Palestine, in 1948.

"How do you know these things?" a sceptic asked him testily.

"I know them," he answered, "because I am a Palestinian."

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

And now, 22 years later, there is this Sarajevo boy. He comes from another continent and is 53 years Mr. Zuaiter's junior. As he lies dying, his shrill voice pipes out in angry protest.

How could you claim that you knew simply because you were a Palestinian, as if that word should make you something special? he asks Mr. Zuaiter indignantly. Look at what they've done to me, and what if you'd been a Turk, or a Chinaman, or an Eskimo for that matter? What would you have told them then?

Mr. Zuaiter hears the boy's call, and from across time, he answers back — to tell the boy that he is not alone, and should not be afraid, for others before him have faced what he is facing now.

It is a very private dialogue between the two of them. We may stay on to observe it if we like, but we are not invited to participate.

And suddenly, in this moment, the embarrassing realisation hits us — that we have mangled this world so much, we are now incapable of fixing it.

For A Palestinian: A Memorial To Wael Zuaiter

Edited by Janet Venn-Brown

Routledge and Kegan Paul PLC

14 Leicester Square, London, U.K.

Steve Martin plays second string — or does he?

By Andrea Orr
Reuter

LOS ANGELES — From wild and crazy stand-up comedy to absurd physical stunts and sentimentally funny films, it would seem Steve Martin has run the whole gamut of comedy roles.

But when he talks about his new movie, Martin assumes a role more unusual for him, the sidekick.

Martin was at a Beverly Hills hotel recently with the other stars of *Mixed Nuts*, the offbeat new Christmas comedy about a suicide prevention hotline.

In the Hollywood "junkie" formula, actors are supposed to sit down,

one at a time, with a few reporters, but Martin made his appearance with director and co-writer Nora Ephron, so that he could get away making just an occasional witty remark while she handled the serious business.

First Ephron expounds on the problems making human contact in a high-tech age, which she says was the film's motif. "If you know the person you'd like to reach, press the first three letters of the name, using zero for the letter Q and the pound key for the letter Z," she says, mimicking a recorded telephone greeting.

"Isn't it better to get that than to get, 'hi, this

Suzi, thank you for calling the Four Seasons (Hotel). how may I direct your call. Merry Christmas,'" Martin says with a smirk. "I'm exhausted by the time I hear that."

"One of the great things that was a thrill for all of us was catching Steve and Madeline (co-star Madeline Kahn) work together," Ephron says, trying to put the discussion back on serious ground.

"You said you wouldn't tell anybody about that," jokes Martin.

Subtle wit does not seem to come naturally to this man, who has stood straight-faced before audiences with an arrow through his head, and



Steve Martin

danced with his face kept turned in profile in a quirky imitation of ancient Egyptian art. But during more than 25 years in entertainment, Martin has continuously

redefined himself. He started out as a TV comedy writer for *The Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour*, a job he took after toying with the idea of becoming a philosophy professor.

Then in his mid-20s he hit the road with an act that caused more established comedians to take notice. Working against the conventional wisdom that comedy acts had to contain jokes, and punchlines, Martin went for the inane. He even got audiences to laugh at incoherently dry material, like his reading of a list of names out of a telephone book.

Martin made his film debut in 1979 in *The Jerk*, a screenplay he co-wrote about a white child in a

family of poor black sharecroppers. A series of movies getting mixed reviews followed, including box office hits *Roxanne* and *L.A. Story*, which he starred in and wrote.

His return to film this year comes after a two-year break he took to write his first stage play, *Picasso At the Lapin Agile*. A comedy set in Paris at the start of the century, the play was presented by Chicago's Steppenwolf Theatre last year, and is now in Los Angeles.

So why, after all this, did Martin want the barely leading role in a film even the director concedes is probably too *Screwball* to attract more than a niche audience?

"I wanted to do a perennial. Now I have a Christmas and a Thanksgiving movie. Next I'll do one for Lincoln's birthday."

But seriously, "Sometimes you read a script and all the characters are the same, they all have the same voice. As an actor, to walk into a room with five or six very distinctive characters, it makes your whole performance come alive."

In *Mixed Nuts*, Martin shares credits with Madeline Kahn, Juliette Lewis, Rob Reiner, Adam Sandler, Rita Wilson, and Gary Shandling, who comprise the neurotic staff members at the suicide hotline office, and their nutty neighbours in

Venice Beach, California.

But audiences may like to find Martin's performance most alive when he breaks away from the group, in a scene in which he is coaxed to dance with a suicidal cross-dresser who drops by the hotline headquarters on Christmas Eve. Martin's character is momentarily squeamish but soon enough drops all inhibitions and steers and twirls his eager partner with command.

"I dance like a guy who wants to dance but doesn't know how," he says when complimented on the scene. "If I knew how, I'd be a very boring dancer, but because I don't, I have to fuse it with my own style."

Foreign patrons keep qipao alive

By Leo Siew Ying
Agence France Presse
SHANGHAI — The figure-hugging qipao, or "Sussie Wong dress," accepted as de rigueur dressing by the Han Chinese — the main ethnic group here until the Qing dynasty was wiped out — is making a comeback.

Today, foreigners and overseas Chinese are giving the long sheath dress with high side slits a new lease on life, while the opening up of China makes possible its return to posh hotels.

The clinging dress achieved worldwide fame

after it was worn by the Hong Kong prostitute heroine of the novel *The World of Suzie Wong*, which was made into a 1960 film starring Nancy Kwan and William Holden.

The Hong Xiang Group, which owns Long Feng, the only tailor shop in Shanghai specialising in qipaos, staged its first qipao fashion show recently. The show chronicled the dress's evolution from the flowing Qing garment to the modern day outfit that flaunts every curve.

"We organised the fashion show because we

are the largest and oldest qipao tailor shop," said Zhang Lijuan, the company's public relations officer.

"We want to preserve the tradition of wearing (the) qipao and promote it overseas. If we do not do this, it will slowly disappear," she said.

Long Feng started making qipaos again in the 1980s, and now produces 100 dresses a month, half of which were custom made for Japanese customers, deputy manager Zhu Jialin said.

The rest are made for overseas Chinese and Chinese women going

abroad, she said.

Long Feng says they make half of their qipaos for Japanese customers and the other half mainly for overseas Chinese in Hong Kong, Taiwan and Macau. Very few mainlanders order qipaos, which are mostly worn here by women hotel workers or brides to be, the firm said.

"It is not convenient to wear qipao in China. There are no occasions to wear them," said Lu Hui Lan, an engineer who was in Long Feng with a friend who wanted a qipao to wear in Japan.

Zhu said the qipao is formal dress. "When you

wear the qipao, you have to take care of your deportment. You can't work in it or move fast."

And yet, before the liberation of Shanghai in 1949, all women wore qipaos, which were made from a variety of materials including cotton, said 77-year-old tailor Chu Hongsheng, who learned his trade as a teenager.

"(In) those days qipaos with no sleeves or short sleeves were popular," he said.

After the Communist takeover, the working class grew and women looking for work clothes

which suppressed their femininity.

But it was the Cultural Revolution that finally ended the era of the qipao.

The qipao was said to represent feudalism and capitalism, and marauding Red Guards burned the garments and persecuted their owners.

"Some brave people hid their qipaos. Others tore up their qipaos and made mops out of the strips or altered them," said Shu Haiwei, the manager of a joint-venture tailor shop which charges 600 yuan to make up a qipao.

A qipao takes two months to make, and ev-

ery stitch is sewn by hand by tailors who train three years to master the skill.

Qipao making was an art that was dying with the older tailors, and women who had grown up during the Cultural Revolution.

They were taught to discard the old and adopt the new, and were unlikely to take to the dress, said Xia Yafang, a young lawyer.

"Can you imagine wearing a qipao and high heel shoes and riding a bicycle?" she asked.

Local women did not even wear qipaos to receptions because they are considered old-fashioned and because the women

do not want to stick out in a crowd, Xia said. "The dress will be preserved, but it will not be in vogue again."

The costume — inspired by the Manchu ethnic minority from northeastern China, which established the Qing dynasty — is the only article of Chinese clothing that can hold its own among foreign creations, its promoters say.

"We can't compare with French designers, but with the qipao we can stand out because it is such a unique dress. It brings out a woman's femininity," Zhang said.

Macaulay's misadventures: Top movie star is in big trouble

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Little Macaulay Culkin isn't so little anymore, and as the *Home Alone* star quickly grows up, his once-vast audience seems to be shrinking at an ominous rate.

Culkin, now 14, holds

the lead role in the much-delayed *Richie Rich* movie. If the actor's recent box-office history is used as a benchmark, the new Warner Bros. film based on the comic book character faces difficult prospects.

Said a leading marketing executive: "It's not a given that a Macaulay Culkin movie is going to do well anymore." In fact, none of Culkin's last three films were commercial hits. Last year's *The Nutcracker* took in a pathetic

\$1.7 million before its plug was pulled, and this season's heavily promoted *The Pagemaster* has managed a piddling \$9 million in three weeks of release. Earlier this year, the actor's *Getting Even With Dad* brought in a weak

\$18.2 million despite a pairing with Ted Danson. As his box-office fortunes decline, the young actor's Hollywood relationships continue to sour.

Culkin walked out at the last minute as an award presenter in this year's Academy Awards, infuriating the show's producer. Culkin recently left International Creative Management, and the actor's dictatorial father-manager reportedly canceled Culkin's appearance at a press junket promoting *Richie Rich*.

Father-manager Kit tried to have narration removed from last year's *Nutcracker*, and the film's backers accused the elder Culkin of strong-arm tactics in an unusually public flap.

At the same time, Culkin's acting fee has reached the echelon reserved for the town's top players, and as his price goes up so, too, do the expectations for his releases.

The movie-going public generally does not base its ticket-buying habits on a

star's off-screen behaviour (except for icons such as Woody Allen). But Culkin's backstage antics seem emblematic of a career that suddenly has gone into a nose-dive.

The critics, too, have responded. The notices for *Getting Even With Dad* bordered on the hateful. With 1990's *Home Alone*, Culkin starred in what became the highest-grossing movie comedy of all time. (It was recently surpassed by *Forrest Gump*).

The fantasy about a lovable, scheming young boy fending for himself earned more than \$285.7 million at domestic theatres and established Culkin as pop culture phenomenon. Soon thereafter, the actor (through his manager-father) began making staggering financial and creative demands.

Holding the *Home Alone* sequel hostage, he successfully forced the director of *The Good Son* to be fired. Filmmaker Michael Lehman didn't want Culkin in Fox's *The Good Son*, but the actor said he would not make

the studio's *Home Alone 2* unless he got the *Good Son* lead role as a demon child.

Culkin won the showdown and Lehman was forced off the film. Culkin followed that by charging \$8 million for *Getting Even With Dad*. MGM's much-ballyhooed comeback film didn't break even. There was a time when Culkin, holding out for a salary in excess of \$5

million and a share of the film's profits, was going to be passed over for *Richie Rich*.

The film's producers opened negotiations with Elijah Wood (*The War, The Adventures of Huck Finn*), and Culkin slipped into the film only as time was running out — for a hefty \$8 million. Some say the actor's decline is simple: He isn't adorable anymore.

ANSWERS

BANK OF KNOWLEDGE

1. Haemophilia is a disease which renders it difficult to stop bleeding. The patient is always liable to bleed profusely from the slightest scratch. It appears only in men, but is transmitted only by women.

Queen Victoria was a carrier, and haemophilia appears in a number of her descendants notably the Tsar killed in the Russian Revolution, and the Prince of Asturias, heir to the Spanish crown. The novel about it is *Have His Carcase*, by D. L. Sayers.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

2. Playfair is a cipher; an exposure meter is used in photography; a Bergen rack-sack in rambling; a grammalogue in shorthand; a crump in curling; a gentle in fishing; a cheese in skittles; bewits in falconry; a burin in etching; a puck in ice hockey.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

3. The best known are those at Moscow (1812); the Houses of Parliament (1840); Tooley Street, London (1861); Paris during the Commune (1871); Hamburg (1842); Chicago (1871, the greatest fire of the century); Portland, Maine (1866); and St. John, New Brunswick (1825 and 1877).

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4. MMMDCCCXXIX. 1794.

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5. (a) You can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear.
(b) You can't put an old head on young shoulders.
(c) You can take a horse to the water, but you can't make it drink.
(d) You can't make an omlet without breaking eggs.
(e) You can't get blood out of a stone.

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PERPLEXITIES

(A) WASHINGTON. (Athens, Moscow, Milan, and Wigan are in Europe).

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(B) 13. (Add the first and last number in each row to get the centre one).

WEEKEND CROSSWORD

FABRICATIONS
By Dorothy B. Martin

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Macaulay Culkin

Diagramless, 13 x 19
By Harold B. Counts

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House endorses pension law

(Continued from page 1)

chance to participate in this government and those which preceded it and occupy no senior positions.

"The people of Ajloun have screamed for justice ... Jordan is not a farm for certain people," Dr. Qudah said as he voiced the loyalty of his constituency to King Hussein.

Dr. Qudah is a member of the 18-strong National Action Front, which is represented in the government by five deputies and is reportedly suffering from some dissent over the choice of its participants in the government.

Founder of the bloc Abdul Hadi Majali told the Jordan Times last week the bloc only agreed with Sharif Zeid on the number of portfolios it would receive but the choice of the representatives was made by the prime minister.

But apparently some members of the bloc are convinced that the choice was made by the prime minister.

Although Saudi Arabia is expected to be a major backer of the bank, it sent only embassy officials to the meeting.

State Department spokeswoman Christine Shelly acknowledged that Saudi Arabia had "articulated some reservations" about the project but said that there had been discussions with the kingdom on that issue.

Asked about the low-level presence at the meeting, Ms. Shelly replied, "We're not reading any particular significance into that."

Participants at the meeting said that the Saudi delegates had not opposed the formation of the bank.

Ms. Shelly described the meeting as one of a series "which will take place as we look into the broader issue of financing institutions and generally how to respond to the structural requirements for economic development in the Middle East."

"It's not the definitive moment in that process whereby nations have to stand up and pronounce themselves on final financial commitments," she pointed out.

Questioned about Saudi Arabia's participation, Ms. Shelly said, "I understand that the Saudis are represented at this meeting through their embassy resident here in Washington."

"It's up to them to decide the form which their representation will take. We're not reading any particular significance into that."

Aviation board

Officials from Israel, Jordan, Egypt and the Palestinian Authority said on Tuesday they have agreed to submit a plan to their governments for a regional aviation

board to oversee air traffic in the region.

At a news briefing, they said they also saw the board as a way to stabilise area aviation and encourage aviation development funding.

Israel, Jordan, Egypt and the Palestinian Authority acted on a study financed by the U.S. Trade and Development Agency (TDA).

The delegates said their plan would need ministerial support from their governments, but thought it would win approval because their ministers were already aware of the plan and its aims.

Under the plan, the board, initially made up of officials of the three countries, would establish programmes to manage airspace in the area that is expected to flourish as the Middle East peace accords move ahead in the coming years.

Other states would be encouraged to join later.

The increasingly congested air traffic in the area is now handled by a regional group under the International Civil Aviation Organisation.

A TDA official said the board would serve as a stabiliser to regional aviation and encourage foreign investment to help finance new aviation infrastructure through government bonds or by leasing some airport operations.

Captain Mahmoud Mohammad Abdul Wali Siam, of the Palestinian Authority, said the board would help win the investment needed to develop aviation.

The TDA official said the study envisioned the board to be patterned after a similar regional authority in Europe and could be followed up by an airspace planning authority to set up regional routing structures and airspace allocations.

Ground laid for Mideast bank

(Continued from page 1)

ally, conceded that West Bank settlements in the occupied West Bank were "a problem" but said it was up to Israel and the PLO to resolve the issue themselves.

There have been fierce protests in recent weeks over land being appropriated on which settlements could later be built.

There have been warnings that the settlement issue could disrupt the whole peace process, and the PLO has called on the U.N. Security

Council "urgently" to consider the issue.

France, which currently holds the six-month presidency of the European Union, has also called publicly on Israel to halt all building in the West Bank.

Mr. Juppe said after Wednesday's meeting with Mr. Peres: "We agreed that things have been a little tense in recent weeks," but said he hoped progress could now be made in the Israeli-Palestinian talks.

But the Royal National Park is not the only place still showing its wounds one year after the worst fire crisis to hit Australia since white settlement in 1788.

Sydney itself is still feeling the searing impact of last year's devastating fires.

Dry, hot weather and gusty winds whipped up some 800 fires across New South Wales last January, killing four people, destroying 206 homes and burning more than 800,000 hectares (1.98 million acres) of land.

As many as 20,000 firefighters fought to contain the blazes during the 15-days crisis.

Survivors of the fires gathered on the first anniversary on Sunday to remember those who died and thank rescuers.

The small brick church in the southern Sydney suburb of Jannali, one of the worst hit areas, overflowed with 400 people who applauded the arrival of uniformed firefighters and ambulance officers before offering them a prayer of thanks.

Although brief spells of hot, dry weather have sparked some fires in the state this year, few expect a repeat of last year's nightmarish outbreak of fire after fire.

Today, however, many in Sydney are still in shock.

In the suburb of Como, a mere 20-km south of the city centre, residents are reminded almost daily of the harrowing fires which killed a young mother and levelled 15 homes and a church in the tight-knit community last January.

Marcia Dearsley, who has lived in Como for 27 years, said the constant hammering and buzz of construction as residents rebuild and repair homes are daily reminders of the fires which hit 89 houses.

At this time last year, Ms. Dearsley's neighbourhood looked like a war zone. Lawns, once grassy, were ash and dirt, while the

charred remains of houses, fire-gutted cars, twisted metal and burnt palm trees lined the streets.

"We never believed that anything like this could have happened because we're not anywhere near the bush," said Ms. Dearsley, whose backyard pool was a key water source for the teams of firefighters on her street. "It's touched everybody."

The biggest concern at the moment is how to prevent a repeat of last year's disaster.

New South Wales bush fire services commissioner Phil Koperberg says the state is much better prepared than 12 months ago and will soon have a computer simulator to predict the behaviour of bushfires.

"People ask whether I feel any sense of occasion on the anniversary of the fires," he said in a recent open letter published in the Australian newspaper. "Strangely, I don't, other than a sense of relief that now, a year later, we are in a much more benign situation weatherwise, and that the likelihood of a repetition of the January 1994 fires in the near future is highly unlikely."

Specially designed aircraft will be part of the state's future defence against the ravages of bushfires, which often begin in remote, inaccessible forests, Mr. Koperberg said.

But Mr. Ayers at the National Parks and Wildlife Service warned Australia could at some point face such fires again as long as arsonists remain at work during dry, hot summers.

"Our society finds it almost impossible to stop arsonists from lighting fires. They give them to us when we don't want them," Mr. Ayers said.

National Parks and Wildlife Service research scientist David Keith said in a study in late December that one more large fire this century in the Royal National Park could lead to a disastrous loss to diversity in the park.

"Respite from fire for just 10 years should be enough to see the royal and its unique ecosystems back from the brink," he said.

A year later, Sydney still feels fire shock

By Jason Szep
Reuters

SYDNEY — Green vegetation struggles to sprout through the ashen residue covering the rugged terrain of the Royal National Park whose lush grasslands, forests and knobby hills were engulfed in devastating firestorms a year ago.

The park on Sydney's southern outskirts is today a heart-wrenching reminder of the fires which ravaged Sydney in early January 1994.

Visitors and park rangers are met by hulks of craggy blackened trees and short stubby plants in areas which only a year ago were thriving with thick bush and rainforest.

More than 95 per cent of Australia's oldest national park was torched, leaving behind vast tracts of charcoal trees, rocks and burnt plains. Experts fear another such fire in the next decade could nearly destroy the 115-year-old retreat.

"When you look across the park now, at least superficially, it looks green again. It no longer looks completely black and grey," said Ken Ayers, district manager at the New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service.

"The past 12-month period has been a very trying one for the park," Mr. Ayers told Reuters.

But the Royal National Park is not the only place still showing its wounds one year after the worst fire crisis to hit Australia since white settlement in 1788.

Sydney itself is still feeling the searing impact of last year's devastating fires.

Dry, hot weather and

The marketplace can't produce a good society alone

By William Pfaff

PARIS — There is gathering resistance to that economic orthodoxy which says the marketplace can and should set priorities in social policy, and which believes that maximising global trade is the way to produce the greatest prosperity for all.

The religion of markets has given us the school of management which declares return on investment the primary criterion of corporate value and considers work-force layoffs and transfers of corporate production to low-wage countries evidence of corporate health. It is a school increasingly contested in both the United States and Western Europe.

The high levels of unemployment experienced in Western Europe and the United States since the 1970s, levels held by this school of thought to be the regrettable but essential result of increased national industrial competitiveness, actually have meant the transformation of 10 to 20 per cent (or more) of the work force from active and remunerated participation in the national economy — as contributors of wealth, consumers and taxpayers — into state dependents, at best. At worst, they are simply excluded from the national accounts.

Is this a proper deployment of the resources of a nation? The transfer of so many people from work, income, consumption and tax payment to government dependence or indigence, nonconsumption and noncontribution to the community is clearly a loss to nation and economy, whatever it does for corporate performance as measured by profit return or international market share.

Obviously, corporate competitiveness is a good thing, but a society measures itself by many criteria, and economic performance is only one of them. The orthodoxy of international labour division, with its faith in the "rising tide" of wealth creation through trade (allegedly lifting every nation's economic boat), too often ignores the real-world obstacles, constraints, manipulations and time lags that prevent the international marketplace from functioning in the impartially benevolent way the theory promises.

History gives evidence for this argument. The con-

ventional wisdom says free trade has given the leading countries their present prosperity while protectionism was responsible for the Great Depression and the international crisis of the 1930s. Actually, the economic "miracles" that took place in Japan in the 1950s and 1960s, and elsewhere in Asia in the 1970s and 1980s, all occurred under regimes of formal or informal protectionism — which continue.

The same is true of the great surge of the American economy in the 19th century. And imperial Britain dominated the world economy when it preached free trade but practiced imperial preference.

The great European depression between 1870 and 1890 coincided with an unprecedented lifting of tariff barriers, and GNP per capita in Western Europe ceased to fall only when tariff policies hardened in the 1890s.

Protectionism in the 1930s was the result of the world economic crisis, not its cause. Average international tariffs on manufactured goods were stable between 1913 and the crash in 1929.

As James Fallows has pointed out, the current orthodoxy, dominated by American and British economists committed to the theory of maximising trade, prefers to ignore the reasons for the postwar success of the Continental European economies and Japan. They gave (and give) primacy to production, not consumption.

They acted in the intellectual tradition of the 19th century German economist Friedrich List (and, as Mr. Fallows notes, of Alexander Hamilton as well). List said that "society's well-being and its overall wealth are determined not by what a society can buy but what it can make." Note Germany's and Japan's continuing determination today to remain manufacturing societies.

The belief that market forces must be allowed to determine social priorities

contradicts the arguments even of the fathers of market thought. Adam Smith considered that the state even has a duty to set economic priorities. He considered it obliged to "superintend... the industry of private peoples... directing it towards the employments most suitable to the interest of society."

The state has a duty, he wrote, to erect and maintain "certain public works and certain public institutions" which, although they may be unprofitable to private entrepreneurs, "may frequently do much more than repay (their cost) to a great society."

Friedrich von Hayek, author of "The Road to Serfdom" and implacable enemy of socialism, wrote that "the case for the state's helping to organise a comprehensive system of social insurance is very strong." It has been demonstrated that the market is the most efficient mechanism for determining economic advantage but society, as Hayek indicated, is more than an economic machine.

It would seem to me that a very important principle is too often ignored in making national economic policies. It is the principle that says living people should not be harmed for the sake of some speculative advantage to society in the future. The latter is what totalitarian utopians do. They sacrifice the living for a theory about the future. The harm is real. The promised benefits, for those not yet born, may or may not arrive.

Today's economic orthodoxies include powerful arguments about market primacy and international economic rationalisation. But they are only arguments, not proofs. A plausible case can be made against them. The case may be wrong. But it is also wrong to throw people out of work — out of a creative role in society itself — for the sake of a theory.

Los Angeles Times.



This photo, dated Jan. 8, 1994, shows a Sydney resident watch anxiously as a firestorm approached his property (AFP photo)

charred remains of houses, fire-gutted cars, twisted metal and burnt palm trees lined the streets.

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The biggest concern at the moment is how to prevent a repeat of last year's disaster.

New South Wales bush

fire services commissioner Phil Koperberg says the state is much better prepared than 12 months ago and will soon have a computer simulator to predict the behaviour of bushfires.

"People ask whether I feel any sense of occasion on the anniversary of the fires," he said in a recent open letter published in the Australian newspaper.

"Strangely, I don't, other than a sense of relief that now, a year later, we are in a much more benign situation weatherwise, and that the likelihood of a repetition of the January 1994

fires in the near future is highly unlikely."

Specially designed aircraft will be part of the state's future defence against the ravages of bushfires, which often begin in remote, inaccessible forests, Mr. Koperberg said.

But Mr. Ayers at the National Parks and Wildlife Service warned Australia could at some point face such fires again as long as arsonists remain at work during dry, hot summers.

"Our society finds it almost impossible to stop arsonists from lighting fires. They give them to us when we don't want them," Mr. Ayers said.

National Parks and Wildlife Service research scientist David Keith said in a study in late December that one more large fire this century in the Royal National Park could lead to a disastrous loss to diversity in the park.

"Respite from fire for just 10 years should be enough to see the royal and its unique ecosystems back from the brink," he said.

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But Mr. Ayers at the National Parks and Wildlife Service warned Australia could at some point face such fires again as long as arsonists remain at work during dry, hot summers.

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Arabs seen reviving common market

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AFP) — Peace with Israel and the emergence of more world trade blocs will likely prompt Arab states to revive a common market they created three decades ago but which soon collapsed amid political rifts, officials and experts said Wednesday.

The existing differences have thwarted repeated attempts to recreate such a market and blocked the implementation of other bilateral and joint economic agreements.

"I am optimistic this time about domestic developments and a merger of the Arab economies," said Mufid Shehab, chairing a major conference on Arab economies in the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

"Now that the Arab-Israeli conflict is nearing an end, Arab political will and thinking will be directed towards that goal because the measures and resources are

marked for that conflict will be diverted to development," he told AFP at the conference on ways for Arabs to meet the challenge of world blocs.

More than 400 officials and experts from the Arab World and other countries and organisations debated a long-term Arab economic strategy at the three-day conference sponsored by the 22-member Arab League.

It was expected to issue recommendations late Wednesday defining the guidelines for the new strategy, covering a regional economic alliance and ways to deal with the European Union (EU) and other blocs.

Arab nations agreed to a common market in 1964 but the project was short-lived due to political differences, unrest and severe economic problems in some member states, experts said.

Later they signed economic cooperation accords on a

bilateral and collective basis to ease trade but such pacts have not become a reality.

As a result, trade among the 22 members has not exceeded 10 per cent of their total trade of more than \$200 billion a year.

Experts also blamed the existence of high customs tariffs despite a 1982 pact stipulating the removal of such duties.

An Arab economic merger will give rise to a major consumer market in a region with around 240 million inhabitants and Gross Domestic Product of more than \$470 billion in 1993, according to official figures.

"Past failures are due to the absence of political will and the presence of rifts among Arabs," said Mr. Shehab, rector of Cairo University and chairman of the Egyptian parliament's foreign relations committee.

"But I think now Arabs

will recover awareness with the establishment of peace in the region and the emergence of new giant world blocs. I believe that the lessons of the past 40 years will also be a strong motivation," he added.

Mr. Shehab, who was chief Egyptian negotiator with Israel over the Red Sea resort of Tabu in the mid-1980s, said Arabs should prepare for an economic relationship with the Jewish state.

"Regarding Israel, the state of war will change into a state of peace when it withdraws from all the occupied Arab lands. This means a normalisation of ties with it, politically and economically... Peace with Israel will bring new challenges that are no less serious than the challenges of war," he pointed out.

Mr. Shehab said there was no justification for Arab fears that economic links with

Israel could allow the Jewish state to control their economies, due to its superior technology.

"Normalisation with Israel does not mean the end of the Arab entity or identity. So there is no reason for such fears," he said.

More than 20 studies were presented at the conference, covering development in the Arab World, oil and petrochemicals, the experience of the EU and other groupings and cooperation between Arabs and such trading blocs.

Former Egyptian prime minister Ali Lutfi said the GATT deal signed by more than 120 countries in Morocco last year should prompt Arabs to get together.

"I have a feeling Arabs will be earnest in fresh attempts this time to create an economic alliance. They realise that they could remain on the sidelines in this age of giant groups," he said.

Mild pressure continues on Saudi riyal

DUBAI (R) — Mild pressure persisted on the Saudi Arabian riyal Wednesday from U.S. and European banks apparently taking a long view on the chance of a devaluation, bankers said.

They said the speculation, which started after the kingdom announced its 1995 budget with a forecasted deficit of \$4 billion, persisted on one-year riyal-dollar forward rates.

But the spot rate firmed after Saudi officials assured the market there would be no devaluation of the riyal.

"There is no pressure on the spot rate which tells you that any thoughts about a devaluation are not immediate," one senior Saudi-based banker said.

Riyal-dollar swap rates — which rise when speculation of a devaluation builds as people question the strength of the Saudi economy — also fell when the Saudi finance minister was quoted Monday in a London-based newspaper saying a devaluation was "out of the question."

But rates were still around 185-200 points Wednesday, meaning that an operator seeking dollars in a year would have to pay 3.7685-3.77 riyals instead of parity of 3.75.

"One-year forward points are now at 185 to 200. If you look at the latter part of 1993 you see these forward points were up to 550. That is real speculation against the riyal," one senior banker said.

"What we have now is just an interest a few overseas banks have in taking a risk because it is very cheap," he said.

Another banker said the speculation was by banks who are looking at it as part of their overall portfolios.

He said if the riyal, fixed at 3.75 to the dollar since 1986, were devalued to four riyals to the dollar, speculators could have been buying dollars on the forward market at 200 points a year for 12 years and still make a profit.

"If I were sitting in London and I did not know the Saudi riyal very well I would look upon this as being a very cheap way to take a risk on the absolute outside chance that a devaluation becomes forced, but those who believe that don't know enough about Saudi Arabia," a senior dealer commented.

"We have been seeing lots of calls from European and London banks who want to take that risk. We firmly believe there is not going to be a devaluation so we are happy to take the risk against the devaluation while they are taking it in favour of devaluation," he said.

Clinton tells Treasury — keep helping Mexico

WASHINGTON (R) — President Bill Clinton Wednesday directed the Treasury Department, working closely with the Federal Reserve, the U.S. central bank, to continue taking steps to help Mexico get through its financial woes. "We have a strong interest in prosperity and stability in Mexico," Mr. Clinton said in a written statement. "It is in America's economic and strategic interest that Mexico succeeds." Mr. Clinton's directive came a day after Mexican stocks fell in a panic as interest rates soared toward 50 per cent, and the government of President Ernesto Zedillo stepped in and bought up shares in a desperate bid to check the freefall. Mr. Clinton said he had spoken to Mr. Zedillo and conveyed continued U.S. support for Mexico.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR THURSDAY, JANUARY 12, 1995
By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: Not a good morning to handle anxiety at home that is the result of a business limitation. Until late afternoon situations arise that call for poise and tact. Be careful in your choice of words.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) This is a good day to discuss with experts how to improve your work routines and become more efficient. Be cooperative with associates.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Sit down with fellow associates and know just what is expected of you and how to have more mutual success in the days ahead.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You can improve home conditions by agreeing with ideas of your loved ones more. Don't neglect younger persons who are eager for guidance.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Get in touch with persons who know all about entertainment which is foreign to you but would like to get into.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Study monetary procedures before you handle whatever it is you have in mind and become better informed on what needs to be accomplished.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Be sure you know your true desires before going after them since there is every chance you will gain them through your efforts.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Get busy and make a workable plan for the days ahead and then put it quickly in operation. Make like easier by being modern in your actions.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Try to get friends to help you in your aims and take suggestions which can bring you greater success and recognition by a bigwig.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Study what your true position is with those who can assist you in your worldly goals. State your ideas and ambitions.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Find the right interests through which you can make progress in some plan which you have. Be tactful in any suggestions or criticism.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) If you have handled those duties which your mate requested, your romantic life is fine, but if not get them completed quickly.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) If you don't like terms of a contract with partners, say so, but be very precise. Avoid one who has an eye for your assets.

FORECAST FOR FRIDAY, JANUARY 13, 1995

GENERAL TENDENCIES: The early morning conjunction of the Sun to Neptune create kindness, sympathy and understanding. Feelings are strong and emotions are vulnerable. Neptune makes us very impressionable as the evening end on a positive note.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Get dull tasks completed early, and later a new contact brings fine ideas so that you can advance in your career and be successful.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Handle the details of a special talent you possess in the morning. Later a fellow associate comes out with a fine idea for your progress.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Early get your tasks completed, and later you can enjoy some modern form of entertainment. Steer clear of harassment.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Clear your desk of assignments in the morning, and later some home matter can prove very pleasant. Take care of yourself.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Get your practical affairs in order and later you can get into some new outlet which is very interesting. Be charming to others you meet.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Early do whatever will improve your health and then you get fine ideas on how to improve your property. Put ideas into operation.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Forget all that detail tasks which are stagnating and get together with clever friends who have right answers to your problems.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Do something thoughtful for your friends and you will be appreciated. After an active day, spend time with charming persons.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Morning is fine for handling career activities and later pursue your finest desires. Entertainment friends quietly at your home.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Early go on with that quest for needed information and then you can contact that bigwig with a flair and gain necessary backing.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) This is a good day for making collections and paying bills. Make as many new acquaintances as you can, since the future is brighter.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Be sure to carry through with promises you have made to partners. Something dramatic can please your mate in the evening.

Birthstone of January: Garnet — Rose Quartz

Record fall of Italian lira alarms markets, press

MILAN, Italy (AFP) — Dealers on financial markets and commentators in the press expressed alarm Wednesday about the weakness of the lira which reached new depths during trading in the morning.

The lira touched a record low point of 1.062 here, rallying to 1.060.5 but a dealer at one leading international bank commented: "If the lira falls past 1.062 it will then fall straight to 1.065."

He said that the collapse of the lira was the result of political crisis in Italy but "also, during the last two days, of the fall of the dollar against the mark."

The dollar has been undermined by a financial crisis in Mexico where the peso has shed 30 per cent of its value.

At stock brokers Murchio Sim, Michael Lerubino said that the lira might fall to 1.075 lire to the mark in the next two, three or four days if political uncertainty persisted.

He also noted that the fall of the lira was not an isolated event.

"Throughout the world fund managers tend to dispose of weak currencies in favour of more stable ones," he said in a reference to the troubled peseta, Swedish krona and Belgian franc.

Other experts said that the lira might continue to plunge as far as 1.100 to the mark in the near future if Italian President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro was unable to bring together a lasting government capable of dealing with the Italian public deficit.

If the new government were unable to win the confidence of parliament and it became inevitable that an early election would be held, the lira would fall and fall, dealers said.

The Il Messaggero newspaper in Rome carried a headline reading "The lira without

support, stock market stuck" on Wednesday. The Repubblica said: "Black Tuesday for the lira" and the economic daily newspaper Sole 24ore said that "the fog of political crisis sinks lira."

The Corriere della Sera, noting that the market had shed 1.48 per cent of its value on Tuesday, said that a fall on the bond market implied that foreign investors had decided to sell.

In an interview with Corriere, an economist of the Forza Italia party of outgoing Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, Antonio Marzano, accused the governor of the Italian central bank, Antonio Fazio, of having contributed to the collapse of the lira by mentioning in Basel, Switzerland, on Monday that the bank might have to raise its key rates.

"This kind of statement, just like pessimistic forecasts about similarity between Italy and Mexico, is one of the factors weighing on the lira," he said.

Mr. Marzano said: "There are some real problems to which we should give our attention but there is also a tendency to be rather too alarmist and speculators benefit."

The Il Giorno newspaper commented that the lira had fallen by about 18 per cent against the mark in a year.

It also noted that an increase of one point in key rates by the Bank of Italy would increase interest payments on the public debt by 20,000 billion lire (\$12.3 billion) a year.

"International speculators know that without serious intervention such as that led by the two governments of Ciampi and Amato (which preceded the Berlusconi administration), the Italian economy can only deteriorate, and so they are attacking the lira" the paper wrote.

U.S. Senate panel confirms Rubin for treasury post

WASHINGTON (R) — Treasury Secretary nominee Robert Rubin won swift confirmation from the Senate Finance Committee Tuesday night minutes after the panel's members had begun to question the former Wall Street executive.

At the urging of the panel's chairman, Senator Bob Packwood, an Oregon Republican, Mr. Rubin was confirmed by a unanimous vote by the committee after members of both parties praised him strongly.

"The president has chosen wisely," said Senator Alfonse D'Amato, a New York Republican who introduced Mr. Rubin to the panel. Mr. Rubin is expected to win approval from the full Senate.

Mr. Rubin, 56, who has spent the last two years as head of President Bill Clinton's National Economic Council, will continue to field questions from lawmakers as part of his confirmation hearing before the finance committee.

He was tapped by Mr. Clinton after former Treas-

ury Secretary Lloyd Bentsen announced last month his plans to retire.

In his opening statement, Mr. Rubin offered to work with the new Republican-controlled Congress in shaping economic policy. But he set out clear markers on what he thought that should entail.

In prepared testimony, Mr. Rubin defended the administration's economic record in its first two years in office but acknowledged that more needs to be done.

"Much remains to be done at this critical juncture if our country is to prosper," he said. "It is crucial that the administration and Congress work together effectively."

He sounded a conciliatory note to Republicans. "I am pragmatic, and I believe that differences can usually be resolved, not always by usual," he said.

"I also believe that there are no easy answers to the significant issues of economic policy and that difficult trade-offs are almost always involved," he added.

Mr. Rubin suggested four principles to guide economic

policy: Maintaining fiscal discipline, promoting productivity, supporting international cooperation and modernising financial markets.

"Tax cuts or spending programmes must be paid for, and we must sustain our efforts to continue reducing the deficit," Mr. Rubin said.

But he also backed a reordering of the budget to emphasise education, training and what he called other "essential" public investments.

Like Mr. Bentsen, Mr. Rubin is a moderate Democrat with strong ties to the business community. He is not expected to chart radical new policy directions as treasury chief.

Mr. Rubin echoed Mr. Bentsen's call for changes in the way banks are regulated and hinted that he would press efforts to trim the number of regulators.

"We can make American financial markets more competitive and more efficient through modernising regulatory structure and regulations," he told lawmakers.

UAE trade surplus halved in '94

ABU DHABI (AFP) — A sharp rise in imports and unchanged oil exports nearly halved the United Arab Emirates (UAE) trade surplus in 1994 and this will widen the gap in the balance of payments, officials have said.

The surplus stood at around 7.8 billion dirhams (\$2.12 billion) in 1994 compared with 14.5 billion dirhams (\$3.95 billion) in 1993, according to Khalifa Al Jallaf, head of the UAE chambers' federation.

His figures, published in Al Bayan daily, showed imports surged to 80.4 billion dirhams

(\$21.9 billion) in 1994 from 72 billion dirhams (\$19.61 billion) in 1993.

Exports rose slightly to 88.2 billion dirhams (\$23 billion) from 86.5 billion dirhams (\$22.56 billion).

Officials said the rise in exports was mainly due to a growth in non-oil exports, mainly manufactured products, as the Gulf nation pressed a head with attempts to diversify its oil-reliant economy.

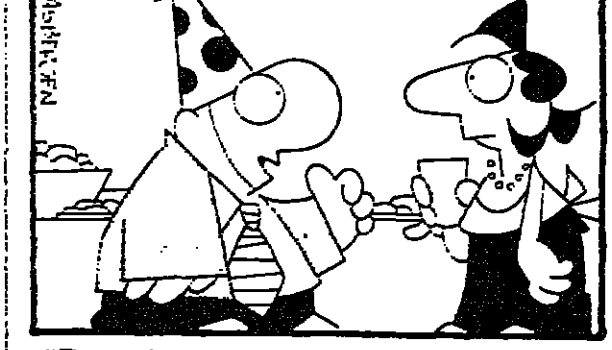
The decline in the 1994 trade surplus, they said, is likely to widen the balance of

payment deficit, which was estimated at 650 million dirhams (\$17.1 million) in 1993.

Oil exports in 1994 are expected to be equivalent to the 1993 level of around 44.5 billion dirhams (\$12.12 billion) as crude prices have remained almost unchanged.

Exports of oil have enabled the UAE to maintain a surplus in its trade balance, which peaked at 30.7 billion dirhams (\$8.36 billion) in 1991 due to price rises and the country's increased output during the Gulf war.

THE BETTER HALF By Glasbergen



"Party hats look stupid—but they're a great place to stockpile hors d'oeuvres!"

JUMBLE THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

Interchange these four jumbles, and you'll see how they form a picture of a famous person.

HITEL
NAPCI
CUBEKT
CRAGIL

HE MAKES A LIVING WITHOUT DOING A DAY'S WORK

Now arrange the jumbled letters to form the picture of a famous person suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer here: A

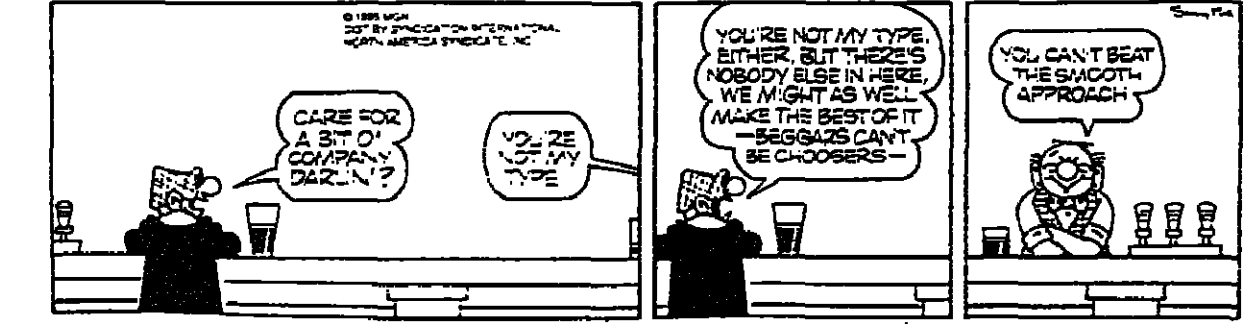
(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: COUGH KNEEL ADAGIO WEST
Answer: What the singer used to reach the back of the balcony — LONG DISTANCE

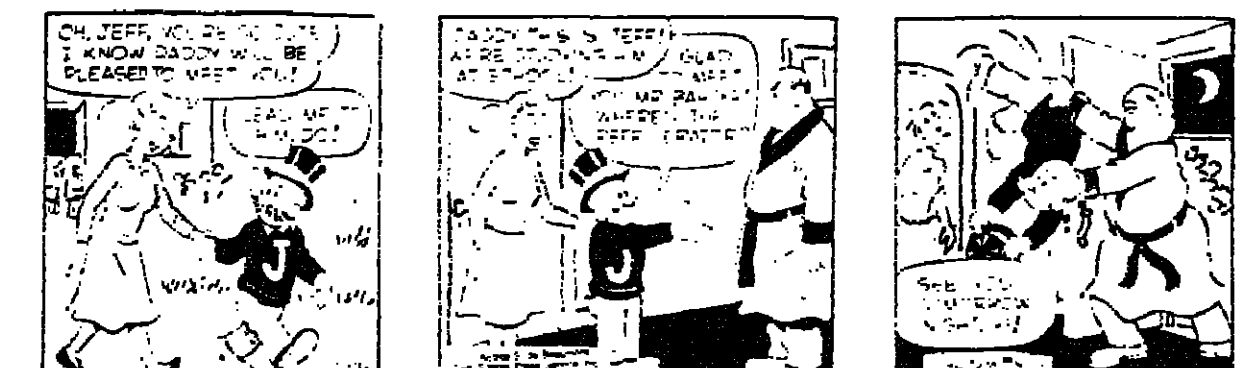
Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



THE Daily Crossword by Florence C. Adler

ACROSS

- Iron hook for hanging fish
- 10 Noted men's land
- 14 European
- 15 Stage whisper
- 16 Gossip
- 17 Start of a thought about others
- 20 End goal
- 21 Joy
- 22 Tenor
- 23 Song
- 24 Brevard
- 25 Not so fast
- 26 Craftsmen
- 27 Songbird
- 30 Red as
- 34 Large vessel for liquids
- 35 To
- 36 Surly
- 37 Gumbo pie
- 38 To cut (verb)
- 39 Students
- 41 Not an aircraft
- 42 Hat (verb)
- 43 Luthern's bride
- 45 Of flying gear
- 46 Comedy
- 47 She Fr.
- 48 Wind of change
- 52 End of thought
- 57 Not as fast
- 58 Wake up
- 59 Fender machine
- 60 Headlines
- 61 Mischief

DOWN

- 1 Roman Empire invader
- 2 Years great
- 3 Bend
- 4 In favor of
- 5 Gull
- 6 Penicillin
- 7 Waste away
- 8 Far away
- 9 Alter words
- 9 Reducer another's ego
- 10 Becomes brittle
- 11 Moves quickly
- 12 Sun problem
- 13 Man's country
- 14 Windy bird
- 15 Bird (money)
- 16 Counterpart
- 17 Sound plant
- 18 Depress
- 19 Choreographer
- 20 Joe
- 21 Kind of painting
- 22 Dwelling
- 23 Musical call
- 24 Palm
- 25 Agree
- 26 Roman statesman
- 27 Roman statesman
- 28 Luge
- 29 Glow weary
- 30 Patient saint of sailors
- 31 Pagin setter
- 32 Luge
- 33 Blather of
- 34 Scurvy not
- 35 "in the bag"

Puzzle solved:

ACROSS

- IRON
- NOTES
- EUROPE
- WHISPER
- GOSPEL
- START
- GOAL
- JOY
- TENOR
- SONG
- BREVED
- NOT SO FAST
- ARTISAN
- RED AS
- SHIP
- TO
- SURLY
- GUMBO
- CUT
- STUDENTS
- NOT AN AIRCRAFT
- HAT
- LUTHER'S BRIDE
- OF FLYING GEAR
- COMEDY
- SHE FR.
- WIND OF CHANGE
- END OF THOUGHT
- NOT AS FAST
- WAKE UP
- FENDER MACHINE
- HEADLINES
- MISCHIEF

DOWN

- ROMAN EMPIRE INVADER
- YEARS GREAT
- BEND
- IN FAVOR OF
- GULL
- PENICILLIN
- WASTE AWAY
- FAR AWAY
- ALTER WORDS
- REDUCER
- BECOMES BRITTLE
- MOVES QUICKLY
- SUN PROBLEM
- MAN'S COUNTRY
- WINDY BIRD
- BIRD (MONEY)
- COUNTERPART
- SOUND PLANT
- DEPRESS
- CHOREOGRAPHER
- JOE
- KIND OF PAINTING
- DWELLING
- MUSICAL CALL
- PALM
- AGREE
- ROMAN STATESMAN
- ROMAN STATESMAN
- LUGE
- GLOW WEARY
- PATIENT SAINT OF SEAMEN
- PAGIN SETTER
- LUGE
- BLATHER OF
- SCURVY NOT
- "IN THE BAG"

Financial Markets

U.S. Dollar	Current
Sterling Pound	1.662
Deutsche Mark	1.36
Swiss Franc	1.48
French Franc	6.55
Japanese Yen	163.6
European C.U.	1.36
U.S. Dollar	Current
Sterling Pound	1.662
Deutsche Mark	1.36
Swiss Franc	1.48
French Franc	6.55
Japanese Yen	163.6
European C.U.	1.36

Central Bank

Current	U.S. Dollar
Sterling Pound	1.662
Deutsche Mark	1.36
Swiss Franc	1.48
French Franc	6.55
Japanese Yen	163.6
Dutch Guilder	3.60
Swedish Krona	4.66
Italian Lira	2036
Belgian Franc	40.33
Other Currencies	
Currency	
Liberalized Dollar	
Lebanese Lira	
Saudi Riyal	
Kuwaiti Dinar	
Qatari Riyal	
Egyptian Pound	
Omani Riyal	
UAE Dirham	
Greek Drachma	
Cypriot Pound	

LONDON

LONDON (R) — Rates for lead bullion market U.S. \$1.00

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Treasury Mexico

Clinton Wednesday... to continue taking... financial woes... "It is in America's... succeeds," Mr. Clinton... stocks fell in a... 10 per cent, and the... stepped in and... the freefall. Mr. Clinton... and conveyed

PE

JANUARY 12, 1995

Higher Foundation... to handle anxiety... limitation. Until... and fear. Be careful... to discuss with... and become more... to have more... we home conditions... Don't neglect your... to touch with persons... to you but would... to become better informed... before you... you know your true... every chance you will... to put it quickly in... in your accounts... to get friends to help... can bring you greater... to study what you... in your worldly goals... Find the right interest... plan which you have... you have handled those... time in a fine, but if... don't take terms of a... time. Avoid one who... ARY 13, 1995... the... and understanding... the... makes a... a positive note... completed early... to advance in your... tasks complete and... management. Share... Clear your desk of... some matter can prove... all affairs in order and... interesting. Be... of whatever will... as an incentive to improve... all that detail tasks... who have... something about daily... after an active day... planning is fine for... your busy course... Early start with that... a positive note... to carry through with... can please

Business Daily Beat

A review of economic news from the Arabic press

Cable car to link Ma'in with Dead Sea

★ Jordan Investment Corporation (JIC) Director-General Mohammad Batayneh expects the JIC to have made a JD15 million profit last year, about the same amount posted in 1993. He said JIC's main investment for this year would be a cable car project between Hammamat, Ma'in and the Dead Sea. The project would cost about JD8 million in which the JIC would have a 10 to 20 per cent stake. Mr. Batayneh said the rest of the equity would be left to the private sector, noting that the interest shown by foreign companies in the project was very encouraging. Mr. Batayneh said the feasibility study for the project indicated there would be a good return on the investment, especially with relatively low and competitive prices. The JIC will set up a company for this purpose and will be announcing the details of the firm this month, Mr. Batayneh said, adding that the scheme will be under implementation towards the end of this year (Al-Dustour).

★ Petra was visited by 161,234 people last year. The highest number of monthly visitors was 23,029 during the month of April. The number of visitors was 18,154 and 18,047 during October and November respectively (Al-Rai).

★ Produce exports during December 1994 amounted to 17,320 tonnes, worth about JD 5.5 million. Lebanon bought the highest volume (26.7 per cent), followed by Saudi Arabia (23.9 per cent), and the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain at 19.9 per cent and 19.1 per cent respectively.

★ The new price for a pack of Cartier, Dunhill International or Rothmans Royal imported by the Ministry of Supply is JD 1,500. The ministry also fixed the price of Lucky tuna at 265 fils a can (Al-Rai).

★ The Cities and Villages Development Bank last year extended 116 loans, amounting to JD 7.6 million compared to 172 loans in 1993, amounting to JD 7.5 million. The loans benefitted 80 municipal councils and 38 rural councils; 47 per cent of loans went for opening and asphalted roads, 24 per cent were to reschedule overdue loans and nine per cent for productive projects (Al-Rai).

★ Under an agreement signed at the Civil Aviation Authority, Royal Jordanian will be flying from Amman to Kansai airport in Osaka, Japan, via Delhi. Flights are expected before mid-1995 (Al-Rai).

★ The society of moneychangers is demanding a reduction in licensing fees and in annual fees, which amount to JD 15,000 and 14,000 respectively. Other demands which were presented to the Central Bank were: (1) Easing of administrative restrictions by providing monthly rather than daily statistical reports; (2) freeing the purchase of foreign currencies from banks without having to get a prior approval from the Central Bank; (3) allowing moneychangers to deal directly with the Central Bank in buying and selling foreign currencies; (4) facilitating export and import of foreign currencies and precious metals; (5) permitting a clearing process between outgoing foreign currencies against incoming foreign currencies without the need for incoming transfers against the outgoing foreign currencies and (6) permitting having intermediate (temporary) accounts to facilitate dealings and ensure a better control between the moneychangers and their clients outside the country (Sawt Al Shaab).

Reduction of car customs did not benefit ordinary people

By Samia Abu Sharar

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The reduction in customs duty on cars which went into effect on Nov. 13, 1994 has sown confusion and misconception of the move among people. More importantly, it did not lower the price of cars to meet average people's expectations and budgets as the government has intended it, car dealers say.

One day before the law was implemented, then-finance minister Sami Gamrah announced that the decision of the government was taken to enable a bigger number of Jordanians to obtain a means of transportation that would suit their budget.

Ordinary people who were expecting to buy a car that costs JD20,000 for JD11,000,

were disappointed since according to the new law it only came down to JD17,000; thus it stays beyond their budget.

On the other hand, affluent people who wanted to buy a car for JD250,000 and it came down to JD230,000 will buy the vehicle anyway since the reduction is a minor issue that practically does not hurt their original budget, says Moussa Kakish, assistant general manager of the Arab East Auto Company.

The custom duty reduction seems to have served the wealthy people more than ordinary people, he said.

The majority of car dealers contacted by the Jordan Times agreed on three main and essential points which confused people.

First, a general misunderstanding concerning the newly implemented law. Many people believed that the reduction involved the actual price of the car instead of the reduction in custom duty.

For example, the custom duty of a car with an engine capacity of 1500cc to 2000cc was according to the new law reduced by 40 per cent. The general understanding was that the 40 per cent came off the price of the car.

Zaki Ayoubi, manager of the United Automobiles Trading Company, explained that "in purchasing a car there are many things involved which would make the

reduction appear so little."

Freight charges of five per cent, price of the manufacturing company (which according to car dealers is set by the home company and does not bring them any additional profit as some people are claiming), price of the car, additional charges (registration, stamps, etc.) 15 per cent, and sales tax of seven per cent are the main fees that anyone would have to pay in purchasing a new car.

Therefore, a Mitsubishi Colt that normally cost JD14,650 before the reduction now costs JD11,300. Secondly, many believe that the postponement of

buying a new car for the year to come would result in an additional reduction of 10 per cent. But, according to the new law the reduction of 10 per cent is only applicable to used cars.

The Autocars and Spare Parts Association recently submitted a demand to the Ministry of Finance to reconsider its decision of not including new cars in the 10 per cent reduction if the model of the car becomes one year out-moded.

Mr. Ayoubi hopes that the response of the Ministry of Finance will be positive since this will come to benefit both the customer and car com-

panies.

Thirdly, many are still anticipating a new reduction in custom duties on cars after rumours have spread indicating such a move. But Nadhmi Abdullah, head of the Customs Department, has denied that any further reduction is planned.

Many car dealers assume that these expectations and the difficult economic situation in the country are major factors in people's reluctance to buy cars.

Most car dealers contacted report that the year 1992 and 1993 were better in sales than 1994.

According to Mathhar Horani, sales manager at Ismail Belbeisi Company, 1994 was not significant in sales because of the unstable economic conditions that accompanied the changing political situation in the country and the low income of Jordanians.

Few car dealers saw 1994 as generally better in sales than the last few years.

Mr. Kakish of Arab East Auto Company said that his company sold 500 to 600 Opel cars in 1994 compared to 170 to 200 cars in 1993.

Mahmoud Naber, sales manager of General Jordanian Automobile Trading Company said that their sales in Honda tripled in 1994 compared to 1993.

Despite the difference of opinions among car dealers, they do all agree that the car sales has been difficult for all

car companies over the last few months, but hope that it will improve since the suspense is over after the customs duty reduction.

A review of the number of most popular cars on Jordanian streets:

Mercedes	31,663
Toyota	16,835
Opel	9,898
Lada	7,330
Datsun	7,242
Honda	6,873
Mitsubishi	6,507
Volkswagen	4,483
Mazda	4,308
Nissan	3,523
BMW	3,464
Peugeot	3,015
Renault	2,796
Chevrolet	2,289
Dodge	2,207
Flat	2,093
Volvo	1,921
Hyundai	1,910
Daihatsu	1,787
Daewoo	1,738
Subaru	1,309

Among the least popular passenger cars in Amman:

Jaguar	90
Porsche	64
Rolls Royce	14
Ferrari	6
Others	11,128
Total	136,778

Some of the cheapest passenger cars in Jordan (base prices without options):

Car	Model	CC	Old price	New Price
Lada	2105	1500	JD6,500	JD5,500
Fiat	Sahin	1600	JD10,750	JD8,800
Renault	Clio	1600	JD12,000	JD9,850
Toyota	Tercel	1300	JD12,900	JD12,900
Suzuki	Swift	1300	JD12,250	JD9,700
Honda	Civic	1300	JD23,000	JD16,500
Mitsubishi	Colt	1300	JD14,650	JD11,300
Opel	Corsa	1200	JD13,750	JD11,500
Peugeot	306XR	1360	JD16,000	JD13,500
Zaz			JD5,200	JD3,900

Gulf International Bank to open office in Beirut

BEIRUT (R) — Bahrain-based Gulf International Bank (GIB) will open a representative office in Beirut soon to study investment opportunities, including the possibility of opening a commercial branch, the bank's general manager said Wednesday. The bank's general manager Ghazi Abdul Jawad, a member of a visiting team of Bahraini financial officials, said the office was set to open within a month at some point it could be upgraded to a branch of Gulf International in Lebanon. Mr. Abdul Jawad told Reuters the office "will study and identify investment opportunities, cement existing ties or set up new links with Lebanese banks and also take part in financing development projects in Lebanon." If Gulf International, owned by the governments of the six-state Gulf Cooperation Council, were to open a branch in Beirut, it would be the first from the Gulf region to do so, Mr. Abdul Jawad said.

Financial Markets

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	New York Close 10/11/95	Tokyo Close 11/11/95
Sterling Pound	1.5615	1.5620**
Deutsche Mark	1.5338	1.5333
Swiss Franc	1.2825	1.2860**
French Franc	5.2965	5.2940**
Japanese Yen	109.11	99.88
European Currency Unit	1.8350	1.8342**

* USD Per 100 Yen
** European Opening 8:30 a.m. GMT

Interbank 30-day rate for 100 USD per 100 Yen 1.8000 or equivalent

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AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET

HOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN, JORDAN
TELEPHONE: 660170 / 663170

ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR WEDNESDAY 11/01/1995

COMPANY'S NAME	NO. OF SHARES TRADED	VALUE TRADED	PREV. CLOSING PRICE	CLOSING PRICE
ARAB BANK	320	58860	184.000	184.000
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	7075	30392	4.320	4.310
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK / NEW	12781	83681	6.520	6.520
BANK OF JORDAN	550	2046	3.750	3.750
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BANK	2300	6654	2.950	2.880
JORDAN KUNAITH BANK	2400	14230	5.910	5.900
JORDAN KUNAITH BANK	8866	27027	3.040	3.060
JORDAN KUNAITH BANK	8950	14250	1.610	1.610
JORDAN ISLAMIC BANK	21356	78302	3.700	3.700
BUSINESS BANK	400	1408	3.500	3.520
BEIT KHALIL SAVING INVESTMENT FOR HOUSING	750	2368	3.200	3.160
ARAB BANK FOR INVESTMENT	12514	18527	1.500	1.490
ARAB BANKING CORPORATION/JORDAN	14472	59649	4.100	4.140
PHILADELPHIA INVESTMENT BANK	2600	4321	1.680	1.660
BANKS SECTOR	95884	374115	INDEX NUMBER: 139.13	CHANGE: -0.05%
JORDAN FRENCH INSURANCE	5950	14668	2.460	2.450
WOLLY LAND INSURANCE	200	510	2.600	2.550
INSURANCE SECTOR	6184	15261	INDEX NUMBER: 137.21	CHANGE: -0.05%
JORDANIAN ELECTRIC POWER	7025	10828	1.550	1.540
JORDANIAN ELECTRIC POWER / NEW	6080	9058	1.500	1.490
JORDAN EIDER MINERAL	3210	8924	2.800	2.800
JORDAN INTERNATIONAL HOTELS	30580	15345	5.020	4.900
JORDAN INTERNATIONAL SHIPPING LINES	1700	5394	3.210	3.170
JORDAN GULF REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT	5450	6902	1.300	1.260
JORDAN INTERNATIONAL TRADING CENTER	200	204	1.050	1.020
JORDAN PRESS FOUNDATION / ALBAT	200	2570	12.800	12.350
UNITED MIDDLE EAST & COMMODORE HOTELS	56149	137918	2.480	2.420
ARAB INTER. FOR INVESTMENT & EDUCATION	3380	11579	3.450	3.480
SERVICES SECTOR	113864	347321	INDEX NUMBER: 132.48	CHANGE: -1.51%
JORDAN PHOSPHATE FACTORIES	18377	54261	2.950	2.960
JORDAN PHOSPHATE MINES	700	1740	2.500	2.500
THE ARAB POTASH/NEW	700	3950	5.500	5.500
JORDAN PETROLEUM REFINERY	438	4243	9.750	9.700
THE JORDAN MORTGAGE KILLS	4700	36702	7.750	7.750
ARAB PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURING	22589	12423	5.450	5.380
JORDAN DAIRY	100	235	2.400	2.350
ARAB CHEMICAL DETERGENTS INDUSTRIES	200	3050	15.000	15.250
RAVIA INDUSTRIES	1950	5217	2.750	2.720
DE AL DUA DEVELOPMENT & INVESTMENT	11640	19463	16.500	16.450
ARAB INVESTMENT & INTERNATIONAL TRADE	32500	23156	1.050	1.030
ARAB ALUMINUM INDUSTRY	650	4660	7.300	7.150
LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	39871	37066	9.40	9.30
ARAB PAPER CONVERTING & TRADING	2150	3066	1.420	1.420
NATIONAL STEEL INDUSTRY	900	2120	2.420	2.420
UNIVERSAL CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	100	420	4.200	4.200
ALADIN INDUSTRIES	400	1808	4.560	4.350
ARAB INDUSTRIES & MATCH/INCO	6480	9528	1.470	1.470
NATIONAL CABLE & WIRE MANUFACTURING	59756	319682	5.300	5.3

Cole signs for Manchester United in record-breaking deal

Sale brings frenzy of transfer speculation

LONDON (R) — Dennis Bergkamp, Matthew Le Tissier, Stan Collymore, Chris Armstrong, Les Ferdinand or Nick Barmby could be heading for Newcastle — if Wednesday's British newspapers are to be believed.

The British record transfer of Andy Cole from Newcastle to Manchester United Tuesday sent the papers into a frenzy of speculation as to how Newcastle manager Kevin Keegan will spend the 6.0 million pounds (\$9.38 million) cash settlement he received for the striker.

The total cost of the transfer is estimated at 7.0 million pounds (\$10.94 million) with teenager Keith Gillespie, who has moved from Manchester to Newcastle as part of the deal, valued at 1.0 million pounds (\$1.56 million).

"The sky is the limit," says the Daily Mail, who claim Inter Milan's Dutch international star Bergkamp tops Keegan's wanted list.

Bergkamp would like to play in England and Newcastle chairman Sir John Hall has been keen on him for a while. The snag up to now has been Bergkamp's wages, not the transfer fee.

"The Cole deal can change the Tyneside club's wages structure and pave the way for Bergkamp," according to the Mail.

The Express, however, claims: "Kevin Keegan will make an audacious move for Matt Le Tissier to cool Newcastle fans' anger over yesterday's sale."

"Despite denials from Southampton, the 5.0 million pounds (\$7.81 million) sale of their cult hero Le Tissier is an option Newcastle will hastily pursue."

The Daily Mirror says Keegan has no less than six targets — Crystal Palace's Armstrong, Queens Park Rangers' Ferdinand, Tottenham's Barmby, Dean Holdsworth of Wimbledon, Le Tissier and Nottingham Forest man Collymore, a Manchester United target before their swoop for Cole.

Meanwhile the Sun believes that having brought Cole to Old Trafford, Manchester United manager Alex Ferguson will now recoup some funds by selling striker Mark Hughes

to Everton for 2.5 million pounds (\$3.91 million).

Most papers speculate on Cole's new wage package, with the Mirror claiming it will work out at 24,100 pounds (\$37,660) a week — comfortably the highest in British soccer — with a basic 12,000 pounds (\$18,750), rising to 14,000 pounds (\$21,880), a 750,000 pounds (\$1.17 million) signing-on bonus, a 600,000 pounds (\$937,600) cut of the fee because he didn't ask for a transfer and 2.0 million pounds (\$3.13 million) in personal endorsements and sponsorship deals.

"In addition," the paper says, "Cole will collect club bonuses for European, Title and Cup successes."

There is also plenty of comment on the move — and warnings for Ferguson should his purchase fail to live up to expectations.

"When Ferguson staked his reputation yesterday, he not only took football by storm but also unleashed upon Old Trafford the player who has failed to fulfil himself at three clubs. He must do so at his fourth," writes the Mail.

Writing in the Express, former Leeds star John Giles compares the purchase of Cole to that of Eric Cantona but warns: "Cole may not fit so snugly into the Old Trafford set-up."

"Whenever I have seen Cole I have admired his talent and exceptional goalscoring ability. But I have also disliked a moodiness, an attitude problem. His body language towards teammates left a lot to be desired."

Former Liverpool favourite and now BBC TV pundit Alan Hansen, writing in Today, predicts: "Alex Ferguson may have blown more than a massive hole in Manchester United's bank balance."

"It could be he has also blown the club's chance of winning their third successive championship."

"No matter how good Cole is, he'll take time to settle. And, just as importantly, Old Trafford's established stars will take time to understand what his game's all about."

"It could all be just too much for them in what is left of this season."

Osaka bids for 2008 Olympics

OSAKA (AFP) — Osaka wants to host the 29th Summer Olympic Games in 2008. Japan's second largest city would be competing against Beijing and Cape Town.

Mayor Masaya Nishio said Wednesday: "We believe there's no obstacle as it'll be 44 years after the Tokyo Olympics in 1964."

The main stadium and other facilities would be built on the man-made islands under construction in Osaka Bay, a 30-minute hydrofoil ride from Kansai International Airport.

Nishio said Beijing and Cape Town were their major rivals.

Blair, Koss, Morcelli finalists for '95 Jesse Owens Award

NEW YORK (R) — American speed skater Bonnie Blair, Norwegian speed skater Johan Olav Koss and Algerian long distance runner Noureddine Morcelli are the finalists for the 1955 Jesse Owens international trophy award, the award's founder, Herb Douglas, announced Tuesday.

Blair became the first American to win the same event in three consecutive Winter Olympics when she successfully defended her 500 metres title at the Lillehammer Games last year. Blair's victory in the 1,000 metres gave her a fifth

career Olympic gold medal, more than any female American Olympian.

Koss, who is also known for his humanitarian work, was a triple gold medal winner in Lillehammer. He became a national hero and international star by winning the 1,500, 5,000 and 10,000 metre events, all in world record time.

Morcelli overcame a case of flu in Paris last September to claim the men's overall title for the Grand Prix athletics season. Morcelli last year also added the 3,000 metres world record to the marks he holds at 1,500 metres and the

mile.

Koss and Blair were already named co-winners of Sports Illustrated's Sportsman of the Year Award.

The Jesse Owens award, founded in 1980, is presented annually "to the athlete who best personifies excellence in athletic performance and promotes sincere cooperation and understanding among peoples of all nations."

The winner, selected by an international panel of electors, will be announced on January 17. The award will be presented on February 7 in New York.

Jordan Soccer League

Ahli face Wihdat, Arabi take on Hussein

By Aileen Bannayan
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Al Ramtha will be aiming for a win when they play Al Qadisiyah Thursday while hoping that Al Ahli will stage an upset over leaders Al Wihdat Friday in the 20th week of the First Division Soccer Championship.

With only 18 matches left in the Kingdom's most prestigious soccer competition, the remaining matches are of utmost importance to all teams as they struggle for the crown at the top of the standings while another battle continues at the other end of the relegation-threatened last four.

Al Hussein, who are third behind Al Wihdat and Al Ramtha, will be praying that their top rivals fumble while they meet eighth-placed Al Arabi in another match.

Al Jazireh and Kufroum, both of whom have managed to maintain a halfway standing will clash in another interesting clash.

In other matches, title-holders Al Faisali meet last-placed Al Jeel, while Al Karmel play their lowly counterpart Shabab Al Hussein.

During the 19th week all teams demonstrated that they sense the seriousness of the standings and the results.

Al Wihdat's 1-0 win over Al Hussein was an important step towards the

crown which the team last won in 1991.

Veteran striker Ibrahim Sa'diyeh, a crowd favourite, netted his team's winning goal in the 40th minute.

Al Hussein's fans were upset when star striker Aref Hussein and Mohammad Shweiter both lost definite chances to equalise.

Al Hussein thus remained third with 28 points and will face Al Arabi, Al Jazireh and Al Faisali in their remaining matches.

★ Kufroum's win over

Al Arabi further consolidated the newcomer team's position in the first division as they moved up to 6th place leaving Al Ahli to drop and near the danger zone.

Ihab Qawasmeh scored their only goal in the 51st minute, as Al Arabi lost a precious point and are now only one point away from Al Qadisiyah.

Al Arabi have three difficult upcoming matches against Al Ahli, Al Wihdat and Al Hussein.

★ Al Faisali scored an

expected 3-0 victory over Shabab Al Hussein who have already dropped back to the second division.

Mohammad Mahadin gave his team an early lead when he scored in the 2nd minute. Teammates Ja'far Hammad and Ziyad Abu Shanab added the second and third in the 36th and 65th minutes.

★ Al Ramtha continued their impressive run with a 3-1 victory over Al Ahli who dropped to seventh.

Salim Diyab opened scoring for Al Ramtha in the 8th minute. Al Ahli's Amer Msnib scored the equaliser in the 35th. Al Ramtha's Mouaffaq Abu Hdeib added the second goal in the 49th and raised his scoring record to 14 while teammate Khaled Al Aqqouri netted the third in the 68th.

★ Al Qadisiyah delighted their fans with a crushing and vital 4-0 win over Al Karmel, but must still score a win and hope that Al Arabi lose to avoid relegation.

The goals were scored by Maher Abu Hantash (10th), Ihab Qawasmeh (56th), and Mustafa Adam (65th and 67th). Al Jazireh also scored a 4-0 victory over last-placed Al Jeel who now have the worst scoring record at 11-52.

Walid Fatafah opened scoring in the 26th minute. Ahmad Rashed added the second and third in the 34th and 80th and Simon Kheir sealed scoring in the 84th.

Schedule of 20th week:

★ Thursday 12/1

Qadisiyah/Ramtha 2:30 p.m. Amman Stadium.

Friday 13/1

Arabi/Hussein 2:30 p.m. Hassan Stadium

Wihdat/Ahli 2:30 p.m. Amman Stadium

Shabab Al Hussein/Karmel 2:30 p.m. Petra Stadium

★ Saturday 14/1

Jeel/Faisali 2:30 p.m. Amman Stadium

Standings before 20th week

	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts.
Wihdat	19	13	6	—	25	3	32
Ramtha	19	13	5	1	41	11	31
Hussein	19	13	2	4	46	20	28
Faisali	19	10	7	2	33	9	27
Jazireh	19	9	5	5	26	18	23
Kufroum	19	9	2	8	28	28	20
Ahli	19	7	5	7	25	27	19
Arabi	19	6	5	8	23	28	17
Qadisiyah	19	5	6	8	22	24	16
Shabab Al Hussein	19	1	4	14	17	41	6
Karmel	19	1	4	14	12	48	6
Jeel	19	1	1	17	11	52	3

★ Dropped to 2nd division

SPORTS IN BRIEF

NBA's Bullard signs with Greek club PAOK

ATHENS (R) — Former Houston Rockets power forward Matthew Bullard signed a five-month contract with Greek basketball club PAOK Salonika, club officials said Wednesday. Bullard replaces his countryman Gerrod Moustaf who will probably miss the rest of the season, including PAOK's European Club's Cup semifinal series matches, due to a leg injury. Details of Bullard's contract were not announced. He told reporters on arriving in Greece that he was looking forward to playing for PAOK and although tired from his trip he was ready to start training immediately.

Spurs struggle to keep Barmby

LONDON (AFP) — Tottenham manager Gerry Francis will fight to keep striker Nick Barmby even though he has known for some time that the England Under-21 star wants to move back closer to his family in the North of England. Francis, who has even offered Barmby a new contract, said here on Tuesday: "This is nothing to do with him being unhappy at Spurs. It is purely a domestic situation and I am doing all I can to keep him here because he is such a valuable player. Manchester United and Liverpool were among a group of top clubs who wanted to sign Barmby as a teenager and if Spurs lose their battle to keep him, he would be sure to bring in excess of three million pounds on the transfer market."

Balladur faces court date

PARIS (AFP) — Jean Nouvel, France's most famous architect, is taking the government of Edouard Balladur to court over the rejection of his design for the stadium to host the World Cup final in 1998. The architect's lawyer, Michel Huet, said Tuesday: "My client has been treated shabbily. If we can't get justice in France, we will go all the way to the European court." Nouvel designed an 80,000-seater stadium costing 2.1 billion francs (\$396 million) which was approved by 10 votes to four for its only rival during an open competition by a jury of experts in July. Since then, the government have backed down saying that Balladur's decision was only a "preliminary step," although the rival bid put forward by a team of four Paris architects has gone ahead with an application for planning permission.

Celtic sign giant Dutch striker

GLASGOW (R) — Celtic signed giant striker Pierre Van Hooydonk from Dutch club Nac Breda Tuesday. The 1.95 metres (six foot five inch) Dutchman, who has scored 114 goals in 182 games in Holland, has agreed a 3-1/2-year contract with Celtic. Celtic manager Tommy Burns said: "I'm delighted to sign a player of Pierre's undoubted ability. His record of 25 goals in 31 matches in the top Dutch League last season speaks for itself."

Honda plans \$380m track

TOKYO (R) — Honda Motor Co. Ltd. will start building a new 38 billion yen (\$380 million) motor sports track 100 km north of Tokyo this month. Called "Twin Ring Motegi," the 640 hectare motor sports and recreation park in the town of Motegi in Tochigi prefecture will open in the Spring of 1997. It will have a 4.85-km road course meeting international racing standards and a 2.4-km (1.5-mile) super speedway oval course. Honda said it will be the first track in the world with separate road and oval courses on the same site.

Thai cabinet decides on Asian Games sites

BANGKOK (AFP) — The Thai Cabinet has finally come up with a decision on sites for the 1998 Asian Games after long delays which had prompted the Olympic Council of Asia to threaten to move the event. "We cannot afford any more delay or else the project will not be completed in time," Prime Minister Chuan Leekpai said after his cabinet decided to spread the facilities over three widely-separated sites on the outskirts of Bangkok. The OCA last year expressed dismay at the delays and warned it might ask another country to take over the 1998 event.

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Knicks down Pacers

NEW YORK (R) — John Starks scored 31 points and made eight 3-pointers as the New York Knicks extended their season-high winning streak to seven games with a 117-105 defeat of the visiting Indiana Pacers Tuesday.

Starks tied his own team record with eight threes and scored 23 of his points in the second half.

"Right now I'm in a good rhythm," said Starks.

Indiana marksman Reggie Miller scored 15 of his 28 points in the fourth quarter, but did not match his showing in game five of last year's conference finals when he scored 25 points in the fourth quarter here.

Charles Smith scored 19 points for New York. Derek Harper had 16 points and a season-high 13 assists and Patrick Ewing scored 17 of his 19 points in the second half and had a season-high seven assists along with nine rebounds.

In Chicago, Scottie Pippen had 26 points, 11 assists and 10 rebounds for his 14th career triple-double and the Bulls held Orlando to its lowest output of the season, downing the NBA-leading Magic.

The loss by Orlando was only its seventh of the season, but its third by 27 points or more. Orlando (26-7) still has the NBA's best record, just ahead of the Phoenix Suns (25-7).

Shaquille O'Neal led Orlando with 17 points.

At Cleveland, Scottie Burrell hit a key 3-pointer with 1:01 left in overtime 'ages Muggsy Bogues scored six of his 16 points in the extra session as the Charlotte Hornets won their franchise-record sixth straight, 116-108 over the Cavaliers.

Alonzo Mourning scored 25 points and Larry Johnson added 24 for the surging Hornets, who improved to a franchise-best eight games over .500 (20-12).

Tyrone Hill scored 23 points and grabbed 12 rebounds and Terrell Brandon had 22 points and 13 assists for the Cavs.

Cleveland played without all-star guard Mark Price for the second straight game because of a sprained right foot.

At Golden State, Sam Perkins sank two game-tying free throws with 1.3 seconds left in regulation, then hit 3-pointers as the Seattle SuperSonics scored the eight points in overtime to beat the reeling Warriors 128-118.

Dan Schrempf scored season-high 33 points and Shawn Kemp added 27 for Seattle, which finished its five-game road trip at 4-1. Perkins finished with 21 points with a Seattle season-high five 3-pointers.

Chris Mullin returned to the lineup to score 23 points for Golden State. He had missed the first 29 games with a chip fracture of his left knee.

In San Antonio, David Robinson had 33 points to lead the Spurs to a 108-97 victory over the Los Angeles Clippers.

San Antonio, which has won five straight and 12 of its last 13, got 21 rebounds and 10 points from Dennis Rodman.



P.J. Brown of the New Jersey Nets targes for a loose ball around Charlotte Hornets' Alonzo Mourning (AFP photo)

FIFA axe two directors

ZURICH (AFP) — FIFA president Joao Havelange sacked media chief Guido Tognoni Tuesday one month after being forced to make a public apology for an embarrassing blunder committed by the official.

FIFA competitions director Miguel Galan was also axed in what general secretary Joseph Blatter described as a reorganisation of FIFA's general secretariat.

Tognoni infuriated Havelange when he publicly attacked Bayern Munich president Franz Beckenbauer in December. Havelange asked German Football Federation president Egidius Braun to transmit his personal apologies to Beckenbauer.

Galan is thought to have opposed a number of appointments made by Havelange at FIFA's recent executive meeting in New York. Blatter said there had been a "breakdown" between FIFA and the two officials.

Galan and Tognoni, apart from Blatter, are among the few senior FIFA officials to have survived the changes brought in by Havelange in New York. Galan was appointed by Havelange in 1982 and Tognoni took up his post in 1984.

Tognoni attacked Beckenbauer for criticising a FIFA ruling under which one of his players, after receiving treatment on the touchline, was sent off when he returned to the field during a league match without informing the referee.

Walter Gagg, FIFA's technical department chief, will run Galen's department and Blatter himself will oversee the public relations and media department.

Argentina play Denmark in Intercontinental Cup final

RIYADH (AFP) — Argentina play Denmark in the Intercontinental Cup final after holding Nigeria to a goalless draw Tuesday.

The European champions were lucky to reach Friday's final by beating Mexico on penalties earlier Tuesday and Argentina were no less fortunate to scrape through against the African champions.

Nigeria, seeking revenge for their 2-1 World Cup defeat in the United States last summer, should have been two goals up at half time.

Efan Ekoku, the former Norwich City player now with Birmingham, glanced a header wide after just 10 minutes when Eintracht Frankfurt's Jay Jay Okocha freed him in the box with a sensational cross.

With 20 minutes gone midfielder Mutiu Adegboye shot from 25 yards, forcing keeper Carlos Bossio to scramble the ball off his line.

Argentina had to clear a Dan Amokachi header off the line with just five minutes of the half left, though the Everton striker was harshly

judged to have fouled the goalkeeper in the process.

Argentina's only serious chance fell to Fiorentina striker Gabriel Batistuta, but his drive was deflected and keeper Peter Rufai smothered it at full stretch.

After the break the Nigerians ran out of steam and new coach Daniel Passarella's Argentina took control.

The side who have beaten Chile, Romania and Yugoslavia since the World Cup and opened their campaign here with a 3-1 win over Japan only needed to draw to reach the final.

But they could have done better, with Hugo Perez firing a free-kick onto the bar with keeper Peter Rufai completely beaten after 64 minutes.

Nigeria go into the third place play-off against Mexico who thought they had beaten Denmark with only two minutes to go.

Striker Luis Garcia scored in the 70th minute, but the lead was cancelled out in the 88th minute. Peter Rasmussen climbed above two defen-

ders to head home and then Denmark went on to win the penalty shoot-out 4-2.

Substitute goalkeeper Mogens Krogh, the villain of the piece earlier on, saved the final penalty from top striker Luis Garcia to see through Europe's best 4-2 on spotkicks.

But they hardly deserved it, outplayed for most of the 1-1 Group A match by the central America champions and only levelling with two minutes of the match to go.

Denmark, who also beat the Saudis 2-0, began the match with a rasping 25m shot over the bar from overlapping full-back Jes Høgh in the opening seconds and midfielder Carsten Hemmingsen.

But they struggled from then on as Mexico, relying on neat interpassing, dominated territorially.

Laudrup — Brian this time — surfaced soon after the break, escaping down the left and forcing Jorge Campos to tip the ball round the post.

But that was their last attacking move before Rasmussen's last-gasp face-saver.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Iran attacks Philippines over fracas

MANILA (R) — Iran attacked the Philippines on Wednesday for the way seven Iranian men and a woman were refused admission amid scuffles last week. An embassy statement said its diplomats were denied access to the international airport last Thursday allegedly carrying false documents. They were put on a flight to Singapore the next day following scuffles with photographers and television cameramen allowed by immigration officials to witness the event. The Iranian embassy statement attacked local newspapers for linking the Iranians to a security alert for people who might try to enter the country to disrupt or threaten the visit of Pope John Paul II, which begins on Thursday. The statement accused the media of "poisonous propagations against certain nations or followers of Islam, a Godly religion which renders the highest respect to Jesus Christ."

3 Kurds charged over attacks in Germany

BONN (R) — German prosecutors said on Tuesday they had charged three leaders of the banned Kurdish separatist group PKK with helping to organise three waves of protests and attacks on Turkish premises in 1993 and 1994. On June 24 and Nov. 4, 1993, Kurds attacked embassies and laid waste Turkish travel agencies and banks with firebombs, sledgehammers and axes. In Munich they took hostage Turkish consulate employees and threatened to kill them. One Turk died in an arson attack on a restaurant in Wiesbaden. Germany banned PKK — the Kurdish Workers Party — in reaction to the series of attacks. The federal prosecutor's office said two suspects, identified only as Senol G. and Dogan O., had helped organise the violence as regional heads of the PKK in the Wiesbaden and Frankfurt areas.

Militants kill trader, son in south Egypt

CAIRO (AFP) — Islamic militants wearing masks shot and killed a trader and his eight-year-old son Wednesday near the troubled southern Egyptian town of Mallawi, Egyptian police said. Hassan Fathi Saleh, 35, was in his falafel sandwich shop with his son in the village of Manshaat Al Maghala when masked gunmen opened fire and then fled. The trader's 12-year-old daughter saw the attack and said there were "three or four" gunmen, police reported. Police launched a manhunt in and around the village. No motives were given for the attack, but militants have previously gunned down civilians whom they accuse of collaboration with the security forces.

Turkey protests at Israeli treatment of workers

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Ankara officially protested Wednesday to the foreign ministry at the treatment of Turks working in Israel, Ambassador Onur Gokci said. The envoy said he went to the foreign ministry to ask Israel to ensure that employers respected the conditions laid out in contracts under which the workers are recruited. Israel Radio reported that he had warned that failure to do so could harm relations between the two countries. Labour ministry spokesman Hanan Rubin agreed with Turkey and accused Israeli employers of "exploitation." Turkey "is right to complain," he told AFP. "It is the employers who are responsible for the conditions of the workers they bring into Israel." Foreign ministry deputy director-general Eytan Ben Zur added: "Those in Israel who want to get rich unscrupulously harm our image abroad." The labour ministry issued 50,000 permits to workers from Turkey, Romania, Brazil, Portugal and Thailand. The foreigners are used mainly to replace cheap Palestinian labour considered a high security risk. Foreign workers earn a monthly average of \$500, half of which is taken to pay rent and food. The minimum wage in Israel is \$340.

Algerian singer jailed for drunk driving

CRETEIL, France (AFP) — Algerian singer Khaled was jailed for 15 days and banned from driving for two years on Wednesday for drunk driving, judicial officials said. Khaled, a popular entertainer in France, was also fined 10,000 francs (\$1,900) after failing a breath test last October. The 34-year-old singer received a two-month suspended sentence for a similar offence in 1993.

German journalist killed in Chechnya

MOSCOW (R) — A German correspondent for the German news magazine Stern has been killed in Russia's breakaway region of Chechnya. Stern's Moscow office said on Wednesday. Stern said Joachim Piest, 30, died after being hit by a stray bullet in a village about 20 kilometres outside the Chechen capital Grozny. Piest was the third journalist killed in Chechnya since Russia sent tanks and troops there a month ago to crush the north Caucasus region's independence bid. Interfax news agency quoted Defence Ministry officials as saying a Russian reporter had been wounded when a Chechen fighter opened fire on journalists taking photographs of crashed railway freight cars in Grozny station.

Iran satellite ban hits snag

TEHRAN (AFP) — A move to ban satellite dishes has hit a snag as the Iranian parliament has been asked to review the measure because of its cost to the government, the official Iranian news agency IRNA said. A special supervisory council argued parts of the ban were unconstitutional for making the government incur "unnecessary expenses" and asked parliament to review the law it approved last week, IRNA said. The Council of Guardians, which seeks to ensure laws conform to Islamic principles and the constitution, faulted a clause empowering the police and the volunteer Islamic militia to "remove the dishes and associated equipment" if owners fail to dismantle them. It also faulted another clause requiring the ministries of interior and intelligence to coordinate and stop the flow of satellite equipment into the country and confront distributors. And it rejected part of a third clause allowing the state radio and television organisation to collect all fines from violators. The money should be deposited in the public treasury, it said.

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Algerian parties outline proposal

ROME (R) — Three years after Algeria plunged into a vortex of violence, the country's main opposition groups on Wednesday outlined the first steps of a joint proposal to end the crisis.

Abdul Nour Ali Yahya, spokesman for the groups gathered in Rome, said civil strife could end only after the army-backed government softened its security activities and allowed leaders of the outlawed Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) to meet.

"We have a major security problem and a key political force whose leaders cannot meet each other. This must be resolved before we can call a truce or hold elections," Mr. Ali Yahya said.

Mr. Ali Yahya, president of Algeria's Human Rights League, was referring to FIS leaders detained in Algeria or in exile.

The groups, including the FIS, said on Tuesday they had agreed on a draft peace proposal to end the conflict at talks hosted by the Sant'Egidio Community, an influential Roman Catholic peace group.

Algeria's government boycotted similar talks last November and has branded the latest round, which began on Sunday, as interference in the country's internal affairs.

Mr. Ali Yahya said that after a truce was established, the proposal called for a broad-based transitional government containing opposition and government forces to lead the country to democratic elections.

"At the same time, an independent commission would be set up to investigate the killings," Mr. Ali Yahya told a news conference.

He said the text of the proposal would be made public on Friday, later than first announced. This was to allow representatives of two opposition groups who have only just joined the talks to contribute to the document, he said.

Three years ago on Wednesday former President Chadli Benjedid was ousted and the army scrapped a general election which the FIS had been poised to win (see page 2).

Mr. Ali Yahya blamed the bloodshed on the army action in 1992.

"The armed struggle was a reaction to a coup which stripped the people of their sovereignty and brought torture, detention camps, special tribunals and the dissolution of a party, the FIS," he said.

"We have no parliament, administrative powers or judiciary, but simply a confusion of roles within the state that can only go by one name — dictatorship," he said.

Meanwhile, 11 people were killed and six wounded in an attack on a bus carrying civilians in eastern Algeria, security officials said.

The officials did not identify the attackers nor give any additional details of the incident, which occurred Tuesday near the city of Batna, 430 kilometres southeast of Algiers.



KING VISITS GHQ: His Majesty King Hussein on Wednesday visits the Armed Forces General Headquarters where he was received by Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Abdul Hafez Miral, the chief of staff of the land

forces, several assistants of the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the inspector general. King Hussein had a meeting with Gen. Miral and discussed with him issues of concern to the Armed Forces (Armed Forces photo)

2 Jordanian Chechen students held in Russia

By Cathy King
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Two Jordanian students of Chechen origin have been arrested by Russian authorities and are being held in Moscow, leaders of the Jordanian Chechen community said Wednesday.

Information is as yet sketchy, but pictures of the two under arrest were shown recently on Israeli Television, said Toujan Faisal, spokesperson of the Jordanian Committee for the Support of the Caucasus Republic of Chechnya (JCSCP).

The footage was seen by their families, Ms. Faisal said in a tele-

phone interview.

The two students are apparently charged with carrying weapons, she said.

"We doubt that they were carrying weapons and feel their arrest is a warning to or a vendetta against the Chechen Community in Jordan because of its continued high level of activity," Ms. Faisal said.

The deputy said she did not know when and where the two were arrested.

The chairman of the JCSCP and former minister of public works, Said Beano, told the Jordan Times that the two students had been studying in Chechnya and wanted to return to Jo-

dan via Russia.

Mr. Beano said that they had travelled to Mozdok, a town north-west of the Chechen capital of Grozny, where they were arrested for not having the necessary visas to enter the Russian Federation.

He added that visas are not required by Jordanians staying in Chechnya.

Ms. Faisal and Mr. Beano also reported that around 20 to 30 civilians fleeing the one-month-old war in Chechnya to Jordan had been prevented from leaving Mahashkila, capital of Daghestan.

The civilians, including women, children and a 75-year-old man are

either Jordanian or hold dual Jordanian/Chechen nationality.

Some are without passports, Ms. Faisal said, which were apparently lost or burnt during the Russian bombing and shelling of Chechnya.

"Today (Wednesday) I raised the issue in Parliament and have asked that they (those without passports) be issued with permits or new passports to travel to Jordan," Ms. Faisal added.

Mr. Beano said that those held up in Daghestan had intended to travel aboard a weekly flight from Daghestan to Aleppo, Syria, and then continue to Jordan.

Iran blames U.S. for Tehran-Gulf Arab rift

KUWAIT (R) — The United States is trying to stir up difficulties in Tehran's relations with other Gulf states by suggesting the Islamic republic wants to develop nuclear weapons, a senior Iranian official said on Wednesday.

"All of that is American allegations to serve American interests... Iran has never been a source of threat to the countries of the region," Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Mohammad Hashemi, on a visit to Kuwait, told a news conference.

"We don't have weapons of this type," he added when asked about reports that Iran might develop its own nuclear weapons.

"Iran will always be a real support to the countries of the region and wants ties based on good neighbourliness," Mr. Hashemi, a brother of Iranian President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, said.

U.S. Secretary of Defence William Perry and Israeli

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said Monday they believed Iran could build a nuclear bomb within seven to 15 years.

Mr. Perry said Washington was working with republics of the former Soviet Union to ensure they did not transfer nuclear weapons or technology to the Islamic republic.

Israel is widely believed to have nuclear weapons but has consistently refused to confirm or deny their possession. Mr. Hashemi said Gulf countries would not be influenced by Western propaganda against Tehran because Iran did not interfere with the affairs of other states in the region.

Officials in some Gulf states have expressed concern about Iranian rearmament after its devastating 1980-88 war with Iraq, and the United Arab Emirates is embroiled in a territorial row with Tehran over the ownership of three Gulf islands.

Iran is critical of the deployment of U.S. and other

Western troops and navies in the Gulf, intensified since Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait. It opposes recent contacts at multilateral level between some Gulf states and Israel.

"Kuwaiti officials always say there is no American influence on them, especially regarding foreign policy," Mr. Hashemi said, adding that other states in the region say the same.

"The interest of the region requires cooperation and coordination... we expect that ties between Iran and the (Gulf) Cooperation Council (GCC) will improve daily," Mr. Hashemi said in reference to the grouping of Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain and Oman.

Referring to the so-called Damascus Declaration, a regional economic and security pact set up during Iraq's 1990-91 occupation of Kuwait, Mr. Hashemi said any regional security agreement that did not involve

Iran would fail. The pact links the GCC states with Egypt and Syria.

Mr. Hashemi said the aim of his visit was to discuss ways of improving relations and what he called the danger of Israel and its widening contacts in the region.

On the Arab-Israeli peace process, he strongly criticised Arab states for increasing contacts with the Jewish state.

"Slaughtering the Arab Nation under the feet of Israel was not, is not and will not be... a way to achieve peace. There are other ways present but, alas, Arab countries were not interested," he said.

"We are in agreement with Kuwaiti officials regarding the danger of Israel to the Middle East region. We together think that Israel is the source of tension in the region."

Mr. Hashemi delivered a letter from Mr. Rafsanjani to the emir, Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah.

Saudi fugitive said seeking to surrender to Jordan

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A Saudi national who is under death sentence in a subversion case in Jordan has filed for extradition to the Kingdom in a San Francisco court, a Jordanian lawyer said Wednesday, quoting the convict.

Samih Hussein, the lawyer, said he was awaiting official papers authorising him to represent the case of Mohammad Khalifa to Jordanian judicial authorities so that the Saudi could be brought to Jordan to stand retrial.

Mohammad Khalifa, who is among 11 people sentenced to death after being found guilty of plotting and carrying out a series of bomb attacks in Jordan in late 1993 and early 1994, is in detention in a San Francisco jail on charges of violating U.S. immigration laws.

Khalifa, who was arrested in early December, more than 10 days before the State Security Court issued its verdict in the so-

called "Arab Afghan" case, is also reportedly under probe by American law enforcement agencies for possible links with extremist groups.

He was detained after U.S. authorities found that he had made a false statement in his visa application that he was not under criminal indictment anywhere while in fact he was being tried in absentia in Jordan, Mr. Hussein said.

Mr. Hussein told the Jordan Times that Abdul-lah Khalifa, a brother of the fugitive, informed him over the phone from Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, on Tuesday that Mohammad had filed an application to a San Francisco judge for extradition to Jordan.

"As soon as I receive the papers authorising me to act on behalf of Khalifa, I would launch the proceedings to have him come to Jordan to stand a retrial," Mr. Hussein said, adding that Osama Khalifa, another brother of Mohammad, was in San Francisco following up the affair. Khalifa is held at a deten-

tion centre in Santa Rita.

Jordanian laws stipulate that a sentence passed in absentia be annulled and a retrial be ordered if the convict surrenders himself or herself or is arrested by Jordanian authorities and brought to the Kingdom. Sentences handed down in absentia would be reviewed only if the convict is physically present in Jordan.

The London-based Al Hayat Arabic language daily reported from San Francisco early this week that the Jordanian ambassador to Washington, Fayez Tarawneh, had requested Khalifa's extradition in a memo he sent to Philip Wilcox, who the paper described as a State Department official handling "anti-terrorism" activities.

Jordanian officials here could not confirm whether the reported request was indeed filed.

The newspaper also said U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher had sent a recommendation to Janet Reno, the secretary of justice and attorney-general, that the

investigation/charges against Khalifa be dropped and he be extradited to Jordan.

The newspaper quoted the recommendation as saying that the extradition was desirable in view of Jordan's "key role in the peace process." The extradition will be in line with U.S. foreign policy, according to the recommendation, as reported by Al Hayat.

Jordan and the U.S. are expected to formalise an extradition treaty this month. The treaty, which excludes political crimes and crimes against the heads of state of the two countries, will be retroactive indefinitely.

The case against Khalifa stems mainly from an incriminating confession given to the prosecutors by a key defendant in the subversion case who was reported to have said that he met Khalifa in the Philippines some years ago and that the Saudi had given him cash to help subversion in Jordan.

Khalifa is a relative of Osama Ben Laden, a Saudi

millionaire of Yemeni origin who is accused by several Arab governments of bankrolling extremist groups. Saudi Arabia has stripped Mr. Ben Laden of his Saudi nationality.

Khalifa reportedly ran a Muslim religious centre in the Philippines before leaving the country in the wake of a crackdown launched by the Manila government against Islamic groups which it suspected of helping Muslim rebels in the country. The exact date of his arrival in the U.S. was not immediately known. He was also reported to have been living in Sudan, where Mr. Ben Laden is reportedly based.

Mr. Hussein, the lawyer, declined to discuss any aspect of the actual case, pointing out that the verdicts of the State Security Court were subject to an automatic review in the Kingdom.

The whereabouts of two others sentenced to death in absentia, an Omani national and a Jordanian, were not immediately known.

COLUMN

U.N. peace award goes to Carter, Spanish king

PARIS (R) — Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter and King Juan Carlos of Spain will share the annual UNESCO Peace Award, UN-ESCO Peace Award, jury president and former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger said Tuesday. Mr. Carter was chosen because he had "contributed to the pursuit of peace in many parts of the world," Dr. Kissinger said. Juan Carlos, 57, "has huge merit in avoiding civil war in Spain, in the bringing about of democracy... and in maintaining the democratic guarantee in a very complicated situation," Dr. Kissinger told reporters after jury deliberations. There was no explanation why the group had waited so long before recognising the Spanish monarch, who assumed the throne in November 1975, two days after the death of military strongman Francisco Franco. Spain held democratic parliamentary elections two years later and adopted a new constitution in 1978. The annual Felix Houphouët-Boigny Prize, named after the first president of Ivory Coast, who died in December 1993, was created by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation in 1989 and first awarded in 1991. Often called the "Little Nobel" because it is given out several months before the more prestigious Nobel Peace Prize, the UNESCO award of 800,000 francs (about \$150,000) recognises individuals or groups for their contribution to peace.

Eagleburger gets honorary knighthood

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Former U.S. Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger was awarded an honorary knighthood by the British crown Tuesday for services to diplomacy and the Atlantic alliance. Sir Robin Renwick, the British ambassador to the United States, made the presentation on behalf of Queen Elizabeth II at a Washington dinner whose guests include former U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Colin Powell, former secretary of state and NATO military chief Alexander Haig and other dignitaries. Mr. Eagleburger was assistant secretary for European affairs, undersecretary for political affairs and deputy secretary of state before being named as the top U.S. diplomat at the end of the administration of President George Bush.

Brussels city councillor rebuked for Nazi salute

BRUSSELS (R) — The mayor of Brussels has sharply reprimanded a member of a Belgian extreme right-wing party for giving a Nazi salute at a council meeting and making racist remarks, an aide to the mayor said. "The mayor suspended the councillor and demanded that she withdraw the fascist salute and her racist comments," Claude Paefelink told Reuters. "This was an unacceptable gesture for a member of the city council of Brussels, which is seen as the capital of Europe," Mr. Paefelink added of the incident. Brussels houses many major European institutions, including the European Commission and the headquarters of NATO.

U.S. study finds moms spank from reason, not emotion

CHICAGO (R) — Mothers most often spank their children not out of rage but because they think it's right for the child, according to a U.S. study published Monday. Researchers at the University of North Carolina and the Albert Einstein College of Medicine in the Bronx, a borough of New York City, said they based their findings on a survey of more than 200 mothers of children aged four and under. Seventy-four per cent of the mothers "believed that there are times when it is appropriate to spank a child," between the ages of one and three, although only 19 per cent said that of children under the age of one.